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Special Features This Issue
"Lake Champlain Canal Schooners"
"Delta Trip" - "Blackberry 14"



messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 22 - Number 12

November 1, 2004



messing about in BOATS

29 BURLEY ST., WENHAM, MA 01984 (978) 774-0906

Volume 22 - Number 12
November 1, 2004



Published twice a month, 24 times a year. U.S. subscription price is \$28 for 24 issues. Canadian and overseas subscription prices are available upon request.

Address is 29 Burley St., Wenham, MA 01984-1943. Telephone is 978-774-0906. There is no machine.

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Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



No more phone. As of the end of this year the phone number listed in the box at top left, (978) 777-3557, will be discontinued. Its intent was to enable readers who are changing their address or who are experiencing delivery problems to inform us of these subscription fulfillment matters. Unhappily we have experienced too many inadequacies, chiefly involving unintelligible information left on the answering machine. Cell phones are a significant problem with oftentimes chopped up, patchy messages. The machine does not ask that the caller clarify his (or her) message as can a person answering. The person at that phone, my daughter, who manages the subscriber files, has many other commitments and is often not at the phone. If the message left on the machine contains such things as a phone number for returning a call or new address street and Zip numbers, such garbled messages are useless and we cannot respond, having no idea who called.

So, as of January 1, 2005, if you have email, you can inform her of your subscription fulfillment problem or change of address at <officesupport@comcast.net>, or you can mail the information to us at 29 Burley St., Wenham, MA 01984-1943. We always get it right in writing. Routine address changes will not receive acknowledgements. Delivery problems will be researched and will be responded to with the pertinent information and follow up adjustment.

If you are intent on calling us about other matters, call me at my office number, (978) 774-0906 between 7:00am and 10:00am, when I am almost always here. An alternative calling period would be from 6:00pm to 9:00pm. After 9:00pm I am asleep. I have no answering machine, so don't call overnight expecting to leave a message. You get, instead, a sleepy voice (mine) aroused from slumber and not yet about my wits.

Subscription fulfillment covers anything having to do with your receiving your magazine. Non-delivery is the most common complaint, and the major reason for this happening is that that you moved without letting us know. The 3rd Class bulk mail we use is not forwarded, so your issues are tossed out at your former post office. About 10% of sub-

scribers move every year, around 500 in all, and far too many never let us know about their move, assuming the magazine will be forwarded like their 1st Class mail for up to six months. Even if you go on vacation for a couple of weeks, your post office tosses the magazine with your other junk mail unless you make advance arrangements for them to hold it for you.

Readers who have been with us a while have heard this rant before, but we still hear from people who understandably think they are dealing with some sort of major publishing firm, and cannot understand why nobody answers the phone at times nor why they are not connected to voice mail or an answering machine. This is a mom-and-pop business run out of one room in our house and another in my daughter's house. I do not keep regular business hours; what's the point of working for myself if I have to be stuck in an office all day?

And so, why not a machine? In addition to the problems deciphering messages, there is the matter of having to return calls from all over the country, often concerning topics of no value to me but entirely for the convenience of the caller. There are 5000 of you out there from whom these calls can come, and I answer them when I am here. My serving as a consultant to those anxious to learn all about something related to boats is not part of the subscription fee. We publish a magazine and feel obligated to get it to you every couple of weeks. Answering queries unrelated to the magazine is something I endeavor to do as a courtesy when I answer a call, but I'm not about to call back.

There. At the risk of wearying those of you who exist pretty much on the leading edge of cell phone and internet communications, I emphasize that letters always get through and I read them all and respond as seems appropriate. Seldom is there a time sensitive matter that really requires a phone call or email message, it is simply not in the nature of such a laid back little periodical such as ours to require instant communication. We are set up here for mail communication. We'll take phone calls when we're here and email works for subscription fulfillment if you like.

On the Cover...

Tony Davis caught this bit of athletic racing crew work on this Sandbagger at his Arey's Pond Cat Gathering in August on Cape Cod and Mark Fisher brings us the story in this issue.

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July 30-1 Aug Champlain Valley Folk Festival
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July 30-Aug 1 Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, VT
Aug 6-8 Antique & Classic Boatshow Clayton NY
Aug 6-8 Hildene Arts Fest, Manchester, VT
Aug 13-15 Maine Boats & Harbors, Rockland ME
Aug 20-22 Lake Placid Art Fest, Lake Placid NY
Sep 10-12 Port Townsend Wooden Boat Fest WA
Sep 23-6 Norwalk Boat Show, Norwalk, CT
Sep 24-6 Eastern States Expo, Springfield MA
Oct 1-3 Hildene Arts Fest, Manchester, VT
Oct 8-10 Stowe Arts Festival, Stowe, VT
Nov 4-7 Philadelphia Museum of Art Craftshow
Nov 5-7 Fine Furnishings Show, Providence, RI
Nov 13-4 Adirondack Living, Purchase NY
(Just to be safe, call or e-mail to confirm show dates.)

"Once you get into one of these boats you won't want to get out." Vogue

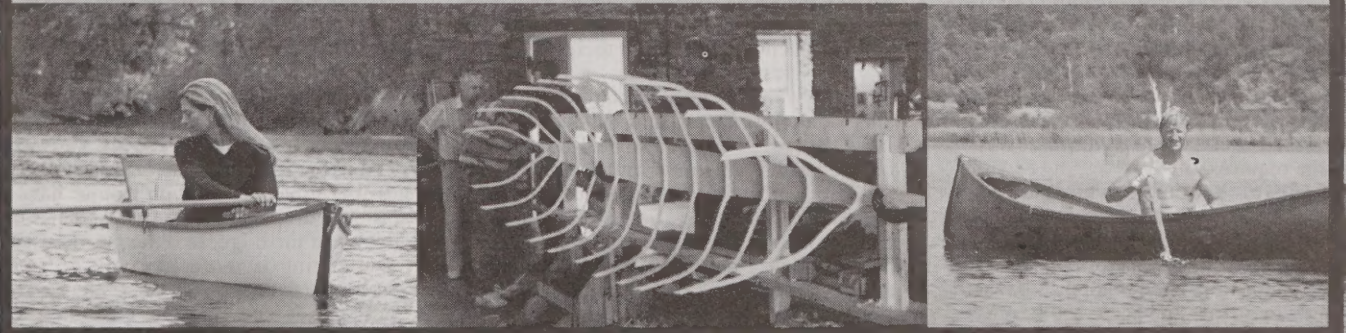
"Truly, these are boats you can hug." Popular Mechanics

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You write to us about...

Information of Interest...

Insurance Follow Up

I was quite interested in your "Commentary" in the September 1 issue in which you related the quandary of the man who built a 50' schooner, only to have to give it away because he could not get insurance, ostensibly because of his lack of sailing experience. The account that you reported matches the one that I had heard, as reported in the *Wall Street Journal*, and I believe it to be correct as far as it goes.

Perhaps you and your readers would be interested in some additional background to fill out the story. I first became aware of the boat construction project in 2000 when the builder came to my shop with a sail plan, requesting a quote for a suite of sails. The gentleman was immediately up front about the fact that he had no sailing experience and that this was his first boatbuilding project.

We talked for 20 minutes or so, during which time he asked me some questions about sails and sailing and invited me to visit the boat during construction. Toward the end of our conversation I offered the recommendation that he go aboard one of the charter schooners that sail in New England waters just to see how somebody else did it. His reply was something on the order of, "Oh, I think I can figure it out on my own." So much for that.

I did visit the boat a week later. It was not the boat I would have cared to build, but it looked like it would float and it obviously has. The masts and spars appeared to be more dubious, those may start falling out of the sky should they ever be put to use. Not with my sails, though, because my quote was not accepted.

As a postscript to this story, I wish to mention that there are numerous sailing instruction programs and institutions in the Boston area so nobody who wants to learn need be excluded. Pete Culler once wrote, "Experience starts when you begin." Some people never begin.

Dave Howard, Sailmaker, Marshfield, MA

Information Needed...

Towing Prams

Most of my friends think towing a hard dinghy is a nuisance, unseamanlike, and a lot of trouble. I think that the secret of towing a dinghy happily is that you must like to look at it. I look over my shoulder and see her back there scrambling along, loyal, devoted, responding well to thoughtful kindness, needing some care, but always returning far more than she requires.

Cruising about the waters of Puget Sound and the San Juan Islands for the last 35 years I've towed a dinghy most of the time, bringing her on board sometimes when crossing the Straits or in short, choppy seas on the trek over to Seattle and back. My friends eschew the idea of serious towing, sensibly fit-

ting good davits or hauling their inflatables up against the transom in one way or another.

My wife and I, plus our 40-lb. Brittany (who has a special attachment to any tender), anchor most every night and spend a lot of time gunkholing for all kinds of reasons. Over the years I've owned many dinghies, including several inflatables. I've built an Atkin Tiny Ripple and a Rinky-Dink, both flat bottomed, a Monk Stubby, and a Bolger Nymph, all prams and all good boats that I enjoyed to the hilt. I'm currently towing a round bottomed strip planked 8' pram. It's a pretty little thing and a joy in all respects.

Now here's the thing. I have a hunch that my little round bottomed pram carries a bigger bone in her teeth when my 31-footer is moving along at hull speed than my other flat, V, or multi-chined hulls of similar size and weight did. I wonder if any readers have opinions about this? If the hull speed of the towing boat so exceeds that of the towed boat, is the large bow wave inevitable? What is the best hull form for a tender that is towed a lot? Does it make any practical difference?

Richard Smith, P.O. Box 424, Indianola, WA 98342, <rsmith@silverlink.net>



Opinions...

I Just Hadda Write

I've been an *MAIB* reader for a few years now and like it a lot. I've sent you a couple of pictures in the past and intended to write more than a few times, but your lack of email I always found enough to put me off actually doing it. When I read your August 1 editorial defending your backward internet stance, I just about wrote to chew you out, but eventually decided it wasn't any of my business... if you are happy with the way you run things, who am I to complain? So what if my 86-year-old Dad and 85-year-old Mum are online? So what if, in a matter of minutes last week, I found a sail maker who has given me a great quote on some new Drascombe sails? And at the moment I'm poking around the net looking for a Christmas singles train holiday in some interesting/exotic place... you wouldn't believe what is out there! What fun you are missing!

I do want to applaud you for your insurance opinions expressed in the September 1 issue. Bravo! I haven't had health insurance for the last 25 years now, and I've had Lyme Disease and Giardhia that needed taking care of, but my attitude has always been that since I am probably above average in my general health, then if I pay my own way for medical treatment I'll end up ahead in the end.

I'm sure that at those times you've told someone you had no health insurance, they

immediately said, "But what if...?" And then they launch into an illness or accident horror story of theirs to prove their point. Here in Maine, where a sizeable number of folks have no insurance, there is a push to offer something affordable and also for cheaper drugs. The thing that is missing in the whole thing, however, is any effort to motivate and empower people to take some responsibility for their own well being so that they don't need the drugs in the first place. Folks here eat too much, exercise too little, smoke and drink a lot, and end up on average needing \$4,000/yr worth of medical care. Each to his own, I guess, but only as long as I don't have to pay for theirs!

Sam Powers, Portland, ME

Editor Comments: No doubt there is a lot of fun out there on the internet, but as my life is already full to the brim with fun I am not seeking more.

Critique

I actually dislike subscribing to magazines, preferring to buy them off the newsstands. I subscribe to yours and *Back Home* because they aren't available on the racks. This latest issue has stuff in which I'm interested, for instance, the letter from Tom Pappell. I never read before that the noble red man was our Founding Fathers' example of being FREE. Now that I'm ancient I hope I can safely say that those fathers ought to have adopted the Native American religion. Look at the way the country was then. Look at it now! Progress and population are our most important products! On the other hand, I've always been thankful I spent my time here with machines and not horses.

I consider your most important regular feature "Beyond the Horizon." We don't get nearly enough world news in this country.

Can't believe anybody would spend a lifetime on such a large a reproduction as the Graf Spee. That's what it looks like to me. Magnificent.

Ron Lavolette, Ionia, MI

Projects...

"We have an old canoe..."

I became the new owner of an E.H. Gerrish canoe earlier this year. One of my son's friends was over to our home one day and, as he was looking at our collection of canoes, he remarked, "We have an old canoe in the barn, it's been there forever, and we don't know what to do with it. Would you be interested in it?" Assuming it was a 10-year-old Coleman or something worse, I said, "Bring it over, we'll take a look at it." The next day I arrived home to find the Gerrish sitting on the lawn. This antique was built by Evan H. Gerrish in Bangor, Maine, in the 1880s!

After inspecting it and after talking with Rollin Thurlow, it became apparent that this is one of Gerrish's earlier canoes. The method of planking indicates that he was still in the learning phase as he didn't quite have the goring figured out, the planking went around the turn of the bilge. In other Gerrish canoes the planking is more like you see on all wood/canvas canoes.

I'm not sure what the best thing to do with this valuable antique, but for now it is

resting in my shed. Perhaps she will end up in a museum somewhere, but on the other hand, if something isn't done soon to stabilize her, she will start falling apart. Gerrish used a lot of iron or steel nails to build it and they are failing. They should be replaced as soon as possible but, of course, that means taking the canvas off and getting into a complete restoration.

Steve Lapin, Groveland, MA

This Magazine...

Something Very Special

As a new subscriber I loved both the August issues and eagerly await September and beyond. You have cultivated something very special. It's fun to know there are lots of other dreamers and hopeless romantics out there trying not to drown. I'll keep reading as long as you keep putting 'em out.

Robert Jacobs, Fresno, CA

About That Fresh Water Casting

It Works in Africa

In Robb White's typically entertaining and otherwise informative article, "Fresh Water Fishing" (*MAIB* Vol. 22 No. 6, pgs. 16-17), I find the statement, "You can't catch fresh water fish with a cast net..." That may be true in Georgia. I have a cast net, but no skill with it, so it may even be true here. It is not true globally, and especially not true in West Africa.

On Lake Bosomtwe in Ghana my friends and relations routinely use a cast net to catch tilapia. The water is a bit alkaline for the human palate, but definitely fresh. The circumstances are, however, rather special and unlikely to be encountered by would-be fresh water net casters elsewhere. Local custom forbids the use of hollow vessels with oars or paddles on Bosomtwe, so fishermen pursue their trade from a shaped log, more or less like a traditional Hawaiian surfboard, that they propel with their hands.

When they travel their legs are stretched out on the log in front of them, but when they are using either cast nets or gill nets they sit astride the log. They also use fish traps, traditionally fyke traps of split bamboo, but nowadays more often of chicken wire. It is impressive to watch them get off the log, free dive to a depth of 20', take fish out of the trap with their bare hands, swim back to the surface, pop the fish into a basket teetering on the log, and regain the astride position without upsetting the basket.

Almost 30 years ago I watched and marveled at their use of a large cast net, the biggest I have ever seen, from such a log. Especially during the month of August, when the normally stagnant lake circulated to become anoxic from top to bottom, the fish were all gulping air close to the surface and were particularly vulnerable. It was beautiful to see a dozen or more fishermen astride their logs and casting their nets in unison in the light of the rising sun.

At least some fishermen of my acquaintance vigorously deny that they are constrained by taboo. They claim that casting from a log is more effective than from a boat, because a man standing in a boat would loom so high the fish would spook farther away than he could cast his net.

Bosomtwe is a meteoritic explosion crater lake, about 75 meters deep, not a place where one would expect the cast net to be effective. It might not be except for the anoxia. For 12 years the lake has not circulated seasonally, the fishery has declined, and on

several trips to the lake I have not noticed anyone casting a net. Perhaps I was inattentive, but I suspect that success with the cast net may require fish to be concentrated near the surface, either by anoxia, as at Bosomtwe, or by a shallow bottom, as where cast nets are used for shrimp or mullet around here. If surface concentration is a sufficient condition, there are places where net casting would take a good haul of the freshwater killfish in Nova Scotia or the much more comestible grayling in Alaska.

Dan Livingstone, Raleigh, NC

Why It Don't Work in Georgia

Dan Livingstone kindly sent me a copy of his article above about fresh water cast netting in Africa. That is very interesting. You know, Dr. Livingstone has been involved in a lot of very interesting things. He also kindly sent me reprints of some of his scientific papers, including the one about the attack of a Nile Crocodile on an inflatable boat that was published in *Copeia* (the scientific journal of herpetologists) and in this magazine.

He is a world authority on the sediments of the deepest and most ancient lakes of the world. Those lakes contain an immaculately undisturbed record of what fell into the lake for a very, very long time. From pollen analysis, he and his people were able not only to count the seasons of every year but, by seeing what species of trees were depositing pollen, read evidence of climate changes going back forever. The key to understanding the ice ages is in cores of mud pulled up out of the bottom of those ancient lakes by Livingstone and his crew. I wish I could go with him.

As for cast net work in fresh water, the reason I can't catch them like that is that it is illegal in both Georgia and Florida. It is pretty weedy and stumpy, too, but my mother used to catch fish off a dock at our little pond. One time she got all hepped up on "aquaculture," stocked the pond with about a jillion baby channel catfish, and set up this automatic feeder on the dock that had a timer and, when the time came, it sprinkled catfish food out on top of the water. The food looked just about like those little pellets that gerbils and hamsters eat, and it floated and the little catfish came running and ate it. As they grew they were so violent at feeding time that they thrashed the water into white foam. It was spectacular. The automatic timer made them

so regular in their habits that they showed up just before the machine fed them. They might have all just stayed under the dock in a big wad and waited, but we never saw them except at feeding time.

Anyway, they grew to marketable size in a hurry and we teased Momma about how she was going to harvest her crop. "Poo," she said, "y'all just watch." She got her cast net and, when feeding time came, she flung it out amongst the melee and caught so many catfish that she couldn't pull the net up on the dock. Hundreds of spines were sticking out of all that wad of fish in a most dangerous looking way and it was a mess. When we finally got it sort of straightened out, the fish buyers didn't want to buy the fish because they were all stuck up by each other's spines. We had to eat about 200 pounds of them... took years... and put the freezer into a state of shock.

There were still a bunch of those catfish in the pond that did not get caught. Well, they didn't get caught that day, but in the fall a bunch of otters came and cleaned them out in just a few days. The way an otter eats a 1-lb. catfish is to swim down, catch him, crawl out on a log, hold him by the head, eat him like a banana from the tail down to the spines, and then throw the head in the pond. It only takes a minute or two and the otter slides off the log and goes and gets another catfish.

I was unable to determine exactly how many fish each otter ate because they all looked like each other and their comings and goings were sort of confusing, but they certainly cleaned those catfish out of that pond. I, for one, wished that they had come before the cast net incident. None of us in this family is all that crazy about catfish anymore.

There is one other fresh water cast netting incident that I know about. One of my cousins decided to stock his pond with those sterile Asian grass carp (white Amur) to eat up all that cursed Hydrilla that some aquarium fancier stuck us all with. Those grass carp are triploid (have three sets of chromosomes instead of just two) and, in theory, can't breed in the wild and are very expensive, but they'll eat up the Hydrilla and most other weeds in a pond. The trouble is that after a while they grow up, eat all the weeds, and then they starve to death, the weeds come back, and you have to spend all that money again. So this cousin decided to thwart that cycle by catching the carp out of his clean pond and putting them into a weedy pond and transferring them back and forth like that for their lifetime of something like 50 years.

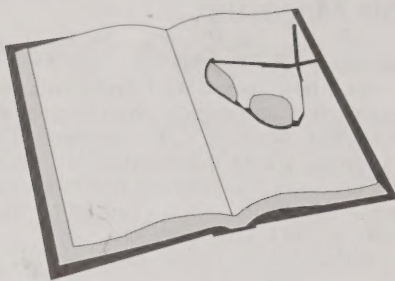
The only problem is that when they get grown they weigh about 50 pounds. Though they are sometimes caught on a hook and line it is a very rare thing and he knew he couldn't get them all out of the pond that way, so he started feeding them catfish food. Since they had cleaned up the pond they were hungry and came readily to the bait... reminded me of tuna fish in the bag of a purse seine. He asked me what I thought about throwing a casting net into that hellish thrashing and I advised him not to do it, but he did it anyway. Tore up his net and put rope burns all over himself, not only on his arm where the noose of the net line was but his ankles where he had tied himself to the dock... and he didn't catch a single one of those huge fish.

Robb White, Thomaston, GA

The Practical Encyclopedia of Boating

By John Vigor
International Marine Publishers
ISBN 0-07-137885-5

Reviewed by John E. Conway



I must confess right off that in my many years of boating I had yet to find a boating encyclopedia that delivered on its promise (the closest being *Ashley's Knot Encyclopedia* or *Chapman's*). Thus, when John Vigor's *Practical Encyclopedia of Boating* arrived, I greeted the event with the mixed emotions of hope and skepticism.

Has Vigor's book risen to the challenge? Not really. While it has its good points and is certainly worth a flip through, you might be better served spending your 30 bucks on three or four used books that cover the various subjects in more depth. Allow me to elaborate.

Organization: Like any proper encyclopedia, the *PEOB* structures its contents in an alphabetical manner so that it becomes its own table of contents. The problem with this lies in the fact that you often have to guess how the author branded a particular topic. By way of example... if you want to learn how to tie bowline and you look up (in the main text) bowline, rope, or marlinspike seamanship, you will not find any listing. If you look up knots, you'll find a very good diagram that lays out how to tie the beastie.

If you had begun your search by consulting the book's actual Table of Contents you would find three listings (i.e., page numbers) for "bowline," only one of which offers the "how to tie" lesson you originally sought out. My point in all of this is the inherent hit-or-miss nature of a doubly indexed book. It makes for a lot of search effort and frustration (at least it did for me). This is a shame because Vigor has peppered the tome with all sorts of nuggets of wisdom that will remain hidden unless you either take the time to read the whole thing (encyclopedic!) or stumble across the entries by chance.

Contents: The book also suffers from its blinding of distracting stuff (e.g., America's Cup... not very "practical") with exceptionally useful tips and tricks obviously assembled by the author after years of experience (e.g., Handy Billies). In fact, there is so much good here that I wish Vigor had assembled a book organized by subjects such as anchoring, rope work, seamanship, motors, electrical, etc., and then filled these sections with all of his wonderfully practical materials. He could have called the thing *The Practical Boating Ideabook* and really served his audience.

Production: My hat is off to International Marine for producing a book with an indestructible plasticized cover suitable for storage in an onboard bookshelf and capable of surviving much punishment. As a kid I had a few Giant Golden Books that utilized this same process and they have survived like new

Book Reviews

to this day. More boating reference books should use this approach.

To sum up: If you have the time and inclination to flip through 356 pages of materials to ferret out 75 pages of greatness, the *Practical Encyclopedia of Boating* is the book for you. Otherwise, stick with your dog eared *Chapman's* and a handful of subject specific reference books probably already sitting on your boating bookshelf.

Paddle Your Own Canoe An Illustrated Guide to the Art of Canoeing

By Gary and Joanie McGuffin
The Boston Mills Press, 2003
ISBN 1-55046-377-2
\$19.95 Paperback

Reviewed by Ric Altfather

Another "How To Canoe" book? There have been many over the years from the American Canoe Association (ACA), American Red Cross, Bill Mason, Omer Stringer, Cliff Jacobson, and many others and all have been excellent. We now have Gary and Joanie McGuffin offering a new refreshing "how to" for the contemplating beginner, those wanting to expand their techniques and even those who have been paddling for a long time.

Gary and Joanie McGuffin, in 208 pages, 22 chapters, and 600 photographs and illustrations, show we can learn from a couple who have dedicated their lives to the way of the canoe and the freedom it brings. The photography immediately draws you into the adventure we seek, whether it's a quiet lake or a roaring river, and the very first paragraph delivers you into the McGuffin's world of freedom.

"For us, canoeing is much more than a physical pursuit, it is a way of life. When Gary and I load our packs into the canoe, whether for a few days or a few months, we feel a renewed sense of freedom. We enjoy living by a different calendar and clock. Time is measured in sunrises and sunsets and seasonal

patterns. When the warm east winds arrive to break up the ice on our bay, we shovel away the last of the snow piled against the barn door. The canoes are inside where we left them last November, at rest on their racks, waiting. They are our wild horses and the very sight of them stirs our souls. Soon another adventure will begin."

We all seek a freedom from our hectic lifestyles and business quagmires, whether traveling alone or with a valued companion, the canoe can take us back to primeval urges to be near water and explore.

Long before Gary and Joanie knew each other, canoes were a major influence in their childhood, which lasted a lifetime. They both grew up in cities that featured waterways near, around, or running through them. They were also reading books by Holling C. Holling, *Paddle to the Sea*, Farley Mowat's *Lost in the Barrens*, Grey Owl's *Men of the Last Frontier*, and other stories that took place on Canadian lakes and rivers. Gary and Joannie spent their summers paddling the true North from Muskoka to Temagami experiencing cottage life, traditional camping, trappers' cabins, portage trails, and aboriginal pictographs.

A relationship evolved and for their first adventure they paddled a canoe to James Bay on the Missinabi River, later followed by a 2100-mile backpack trip as through hikers on the Appalachian Trail. Soon after their marriage, actually their honeymoon, they launched their canoe into the Gulf of St. Lawrence to begin a 6000-mile, two season canoe adventure to the Arctic Ocean.

Paddle Your Own Canoe is the product of these and many other adventures, along with lessons learned by Gary and Joanie. They write, "Step into a canoe, pick up a paddle, and you become one with the wind and water. Learning to canoe is a journey both inward and outward and it can easily be a life-long pursuit. Our parents gave us the gift of their encouragement in our canoeing life. We now pass this gift along to you in the writing of this book."

Beyond the McGuffin's philosophy of canoeing they include the basics of canoe terminology, selection, safety, outfitting, paddle selection, sizing, physical conditioning, launch techniques, and portaging the canoe which culminates in everything you need to know as an amateur and also provides a good refresher for the experienced paddler. The book is divided into two sections, flatwater and moving water/river paddling. Solo and tandem paddling strokes, techniques, and launching and landing procedures are demonstrated in each section along with various maneuvers to get the canoe moving where you want it to go.

The flatwater pictures and illustrations are clear and concise with excellent captions. The moving water sections offer a 100' overhead view of the river technique along with a cross section illustration indicating hazards associated with river travel. Each paddling stroke is first explained and then illustrated in a sequence of events that complete the stroke. The chapters on transporting your canoe offer excellent advice from tying it onto the roof of your car to low impact lifting and detailed knot tying.

In my opinion, one of the most important safety items along with your PFD should be this book.



Window on the Water

By Chris Kaiser

Rivers of Fog

The weather is always foremost in the minds of boaters, perhaps most messers are more weather wary than normal recreational boaters due to the more diminutive size of our craft and the odd areas that we find ourselves messing about in. We tend to seek the backwaters, the out-of-the-way coves, the long, narrow streams that haven't seen a boat in decades, and tease our imaginations. We don't, as a rule, have a lot of electronic equipment at our fingertips to help a rescue party find us or to avoid getting into an inhospitable spot to begin with. We rely on the equipment that comes with whichever model and make vessel we own and whatever amount of common sense the creator installed in our helmsman and crew.

I'm mentioning the gadgets many boaters rely on to make a point, this is the start of a season where the conditions can change very quickly and small craft operators need to check their equipment before setting out on an adventure. Most important is the creator-issued set of equipment in helm and crew, common sense. Have you checked the weather predictions with a reliable marine forecast service? Are you fine-tuning the "gut instinct" gadget, do you really feel that it's safe to go off into the tules when there are no other boaters on the water due to an early morning fog bank? Is it only going to last a few hours or will the entire region become socked in as the day progresses? Do you have the handheld marine radio battery fully charged? Is the GPS unit in a pocket of the coat you are wearing and not hanging in the closet? What about that dratted cell phone? Keep it turned off but bring it along because you may need to reach out and touch someone for help getting home safely.

Now that you're properly equipped, go mess to your heart's content. Oh, one more item (aside from the regulation flare kit the Coast Guard recommends) is a sturdy waterproof flashlight. Let the inner kid rule and buy one of those out of the discount sportsman's catalogs... you know, the ones that send a beam of light a mile away. It could make all the difference as the days get shorter.

The view from the reglazed and newly scrubbed window on the water engendered

the musing about equipment. I looked out at 6:15 and saw a wall of fog snaking out of the mouth of the Ipswich River. Jogging to the top of Plover Hill, the scene I witnessed was one that the best filmmaker couldn't have crafted. The cold nights of early fall (and where was summer?) have sucked the warmth up off the languid river and coalesced it into a dense but ephemeral vapor.

This localized phenomenon is mirroring the action of the water it sits over. Hovering a few inches off the water's surface, the fog is twisting and turning as the incoming tide pushes the water back up the course to fill the empty inlets and press on into the exposed marsh grasses. As the water moves on, the fog shimmers and breaks into tattered filaments. Each inch of tidal rise moves the vapors further out over the marshland, ripping the seemingly impenetrable wall of white to shreds before the heat of a diminished sun warms the surrounding air mass enough to reabsorb the water droplets.

Crane's Beach across the river has a thin film of beach fog. Looking down along the southern stretch of coastline I can see the effects of this sudden cooling off last night. Each spot where I know there is an inlet or a quiet area of warmer water has a clot of fog spilling out of it onto the Ipswich Bay water. The far coastline of Cape Ann is obscured and my mind visits the bays and beaches across the sound. Fog is one of the many pleasures of coastal living. Fog, if you don't have to go out in it to earn a living, is beautiful. The morning was one of unsurpassed crispness. The sun, once risen above the narrow band of horizon obscuring fog, was brilliant and warm on the face turned to it for comfort.

Soon we'll mark the autumnal equinox, the start of a long slide into darkness. This summer was fleeting at best, glorious if you were fortunate to be out on the water on one of the half-dozen perfect days, and annoying if you'd missed them. The water never seemed to warm up beyond 60°, even the tide pooling stretches weren't as welcoming as in years past. Perhaps it is a case of older bones and thinner blood, but I don't think so. I believe we have a climate change on our hands and our region isn't seeing it as global warming. Woolly mammoths on the salt marshes? Perhaps not, but I'm willing to bet these next few months will see many more, and earlier, rivers of fog then in years past.



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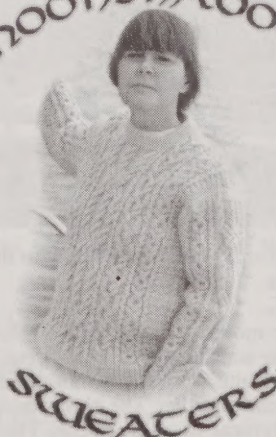


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The small cats' start.

We saw the ad for the catboat regatta in the *Cape Codder* over breakfast. We looked out the window at *Molly*, the 14' Cape Dory Handi Cat, lying to her mooring in the small cove at the end of the lawn, known by the family as Frostfish Cove, and remembered the photos of dozens of small catboats that *Messing About in Boats* had run in previous years. It didn't take long to formulate the idea of entering *Molly* in the race, especially as the entry fee of \$12 was all to be donated to the Friends of Pleasant Bay.

The first consideration was crew. My wife's sister Theda volunteered to helm, based on her small boat racing experience. She had a happy memory of a dismasting in a Comet where she and her father still came in first with the mast broken at the spreaders. We would have plenty of possible "string pullers" to help out, but since *Molly* is only 14' long, there would only be room for one. There would also be a need for kid wranglers as well, and that's what I volunteered for, remembering the photos from those *Boats* articles, and thinking that I might add a few as well.

My stepson Ned showed up with his two children, Sarah and Lyw. We told him about the race and rather than "string pulling," he proposed skippering the other available Cape Dory product, the 14' *Ex Libris*. While she was a Whitehall pulling boat, not a "traditional" catboat, she was cat rigged, though with a gunter rigged sail rather than a conventional gaff. We pulled it out of storage and I assembled the rig. I found almost all of it, except for battens. I took advantage of the trip to Arey's Pond Boatyard to get the battens to also sign *Ex Libris* up for the race.

On Wednesday, when enough water had filled in the cove, I tried her out for a trial sail. In the brisk wind the sail shape was a disappointment, ballooning out from the lower mast where the "shower curtain" type sail hoops couldn't be fitted. The wind was strong and even with a "fisherman's reef" in the top half of the sail, the mast was bowing sharply. With a sudden ripping pop the sail suddenly blew off the mast as all the shower curtain rings released until the sail was held only at the tack and head. I threw out the anchor, slacked the halyard, re-snapped the shower curtain rings, and rolled in a reef. With the sail held more closely and the smaller sail area, the sail shape was much better and the speed reefed was as great as before. In fleet maneuvers I wasn't able to keep up with *Molly*, even though she was reefed as well. Another worry was the presence of two hurricanes, Bonnie and Charlie, both potentially ready to land on us for the weekend.

On Friday, the day before the race, Ned and Lyw took *Ex Libris* out while my wife and I went along in a skiff to get an outside

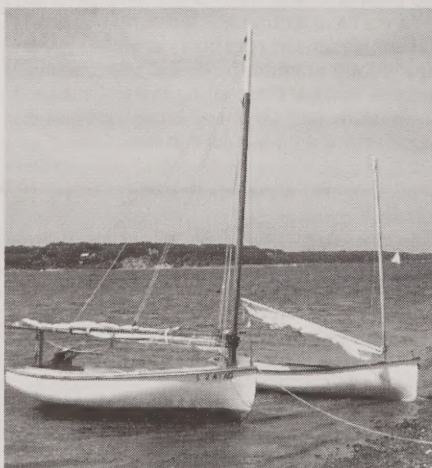
A Day at the Races

The Team Frostfish Assault On the Arey's Pond Catboat Regatta

By Mark Fisher 2004

view of their trim. It was blowing briskly and he kept the reef tied in. By the time we got to Namequoit Point, near where the race was to start the next day, the wind had dropped and we dropped the reef. I cured the luff looseness with a lacing on the lower third of the sail's luff and the sail set pretty well.

I traded off with Lyw and Ned and I did a "trial race" over the first part of the course, the very familiar Little Pleasant Bay. The wind may have dropped but it was still pretty muscular. The whippy aluminum spar was bending 4" out of column! Still, the mast sprang back straight when the wind's pressure was released. The race schedule had included a trial race on Friday, but we were the only boat on the bay sailing the course. The weather was gloomy with occasional light showers of rain in warm air, thanks to the remnants of Bonnie. Charlie was chewing up Florida at the time. Ned and Theda spent time going over the race packet.



Team Frostfish on the beach ready to depart for the races.

On the morning of the race we looked out to warm sunshine and high cirrus. The feared high winds were totally absent, all we had was a gentle norther. The cove was a pool of mud, a typical low tide scene. The race was set for high tide at 1:30, and in the morn-

ing all we could do was think of what changes to make and look out across the mud. Soon the sun and moon had done their thing and water came back in. *Molly* also needed some tweaking. She'd had her mast stepped without the wind pennant on the masthead. I careened her to the float and put up a pennant at the masthead. We pulled the motor to save weight. *Molly* also got a Brazilian flag for her gaff to help us find her in the scrum, while *Ex Libris* got Lyw's pirate flag.

There was a final flurry of picnic, race, and kid preparations and we were off to Namequoit Point with the skiff towing both competitors. At the beach there was a hurried picnic. Edward and Lyw squeezed in a quick swim. We watched as catboats of all descriptions filtered in from the many moorings and streams around the bay. Out in the bay we saw a large black sandbagger, its drooping bowsprit almost as long as the hull. Beetle Cats, Arey's Pond Cats, and Marshall Cats, spiced with Wiannos, a few Handi Cats, and a Herreshof American, milled around.



Theda and Edward get set to go out in *Molly*.

Our racers set out. Ned had Lyw as crew and Theda had her son Edward. Soon the spectator side of the team followed. The first gun, for Traditional Class, went off and the Wianno Sr. and the Sandbagger crossed the line. Five minutes later the next gun went off with the Marshall cats and big Arey's Pond cats racing each other and Ned in the *Ex Libris*! We were convinced that he'd started at the wrong gun. Five minutes later the gun for the small catboats went off, with *Molly* in a cloud of Beetle cats and other small catboats.

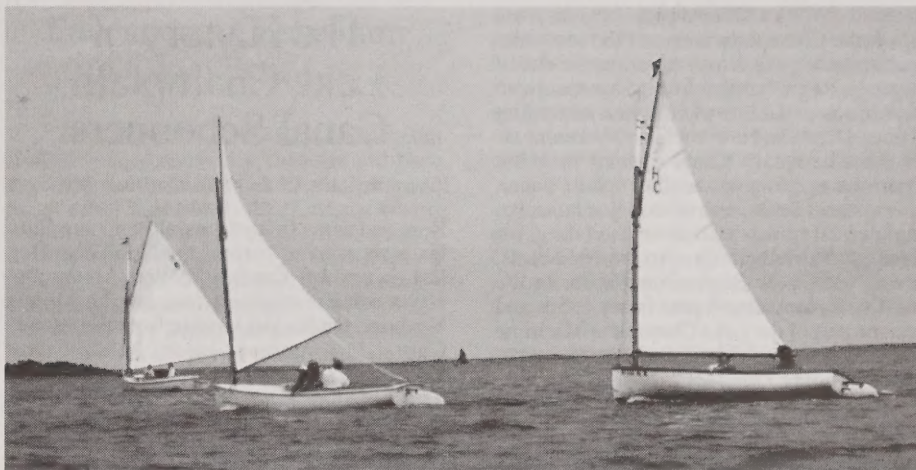


Same class?

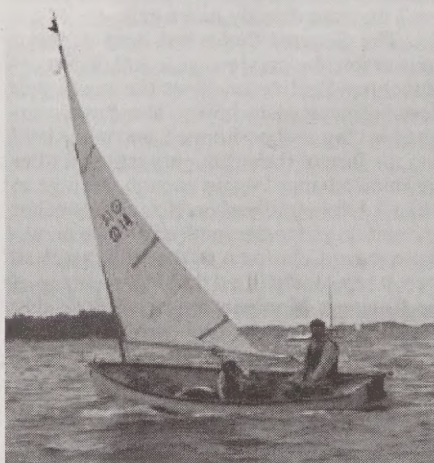
We zoomed up to the Narrows between Little and Big Pleasant Bay, but Ned in *Ex Libris* was already through. We merged with the racers and motored on into Big Pleasant Bay. The early light winds had filled in to a perfect small boat race breeze. We saw Theda in *Molly* off on the north shore, while the rest of the competitors spread out in tacks across the bay toward the far end. We waited by the last mark before the return pass. The sandbagger came by with a crew member on the end of the bowsprit, a novel way to trim ship!

Shortly, in the middle of the big catboat division, there was *Molly*! Theda had worked to the lead in her division! Ned was a few minutes behind her and we followed them back through the Narrows, then sped ahead to wait for them at the finish line.

Theda was soon across and got the gun for the 16' and under class and Ned was across soon after. We met at the point and talked over the race. Theda had methodically picked her way through the fleet and had eventually run out of boats in her class to pass; *Ex Libris* had been moved up from the "Under 16" class" as she "was not a traditional catboat." If he had been included in the smaller class his time would have placed him third. We all sighed, but there were others that had received the same placement, even though their length would have put them in the smaller division.



The hot boat with "the woman in the black bathing suit" mopping up the small cats.



Ned and Lyw moving right along in *Ex Libris*

My wife and I sailed *Ex Libris* back while our other spectators and the racers headed home in the skiff, towing *Molly*, so Theda could pick up her first place plaque. There were more than 300 at the awards cer-

emony and more than \$1,500 was collected for Friends of Pleasant Bay. Edward got to join his mom at the podium and receive the prize, a wonderful way to be introduced to sailboat racing. On the way back a small girl complimented us on the pirate flag at our masthead.

**"Every man shall give as he is able,
according to the blessings of the Lord"
(Deut 16:16)**

Needed: Boats and nautical gear

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Class Winners

Traditional Class (7)	Lee Scarborough	Sandbagger	1:33:33
Marshall 18s (16)	Charles Bartlett	Second Wind	1:41:49
Marshall 15s (3)	Don Powers	Paws Cat	1:43:20
Crosby Cats (2)	Eliza McClennen	Lestris	1:50:45
Catboats Over 20' (2)	Burt & Drew Staniar	Pandora	1:51:41
APBY 16 Lynx Cabin (6)	Gould & Davis	Djiril	1:58:07
Classic Cats (9)	Theda Fowler	Molly	1:58:13
APBY 16 Lynx Open (1)	Skip hall	Scoot'n	1:58:35
APBY 14 (21)	Lupien & Rooney	Cazt-Man-Do	2:07:27
Beetle Cats (5)	Marsha Puchkoff	Dream	2:10:27

The Traditional Class included a Sandbagger, Dunbar Monomy, Wianno Sr., Bay Bird, APBY D/S 18, Salisbury Pt. Skiff and Cape Dory.

The Marshall 15s were joined by a Witholtz Custom Cat.

The Marshall 18s were joined by a Hereshoff America and a Cape Cod Cat.

The 4 Classic Cats were joined by 4 Handy Cats and 1 Compass Cat.

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An Overview...

Lake Champlain is one of the most historic waterways in North America, the site of major strategic battles during the American Revolution and a hub of commercial trading between Canada, New York, and Vermont after the Champlain Canal opened in 1823. Upon the opening of the Champlain Canal, sailing canal boats became a major means of commercial transportation on the lake. Two canal schooners belonging to the 1862 class, having sunk near Burlington Harbor in the late 1800s, were discovered in the 1980s and became part of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum's archeological studies and the basis for building *Lois McClure*.

The Story....

In 1823, the Northern Canal connecting Lake Champlain to the Hudson River was completed. The lake, which since the end of the American Revolution had been an expanding commercial highway, now virtually exploded in trade. Along with the traditionally designed sloops, schooners, and the recently invented steamboats, the lake now witnessed the birth of a watercraft new to North America, the sailing canal boat.

The Lake Champlain sailing canal boat was built as an experiment and designed to be able to sail from distant lake ports to the canal on the power of the wind. Upon reaching the canal the masts were lowered and centerboard raised and the now transformed vessel could directly enter the canal. The first editions of the craft, dubbed the 1823 class, were characterized by the randomness of their design. By 1841 the design had been standardized and the 1841 class boats were just under 80' in length and roughly 13-1/2' in beam so that they could fit the locks and canal prism of that period.

By 1862 the expansion of the canal allowed an expansion of design with the 1862 class. The new vessel was roughly 88' in length and 14-1/2' in beam with a slightly deeper depth of hold. When the design expanded, two new boats were built along these new dimensions, one in Burlington, Vermont, and one in Essex, New York.

The *O.J. Walker* was built by Burlington shipwright Orson Spear, perhaps the most celebrated and prolific boat builder of his day, and named for successful Burlington merchant Obadiah J. Walker. During its long working life, the *O.J. Walker* had numerous owners and at least one of her captains, Thomas Weatherwax, would sail with his entire family living on board. Boats like the *O.J. Walker* carried coal, marble, lumber, iron ore, farm produce, and occasionally even people on excursions. Her last owners were the J.W. Brown Brick Company of Mallets Bay, Vermont, and on her last voyage she had a deck load of bricks and drain tile. While entering Burlington Harbor from the north, the old ship apparently sprang a leak and began to sink. Her captain dropped his anchor and launched his yawl boat and although without oars, they gradually were blown into shore. The *O.J. Walker* was declared a total loss and abandoned to remain on the bottom of the lake. It was rediscovered during an underwater excursion in 1984. The intact ship, with cargo, masts, and spars still present, has been carefully documented over the past decade.

The *General Butler* was built at the Essex, New York, shipyard of Hoskins and

The History of Lake Champlain Canal Schooners

From the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum

Ross and named after General Benjamin Butler, a short-lived hero of the Civil War. Her last owner was Captain William Montgomery, a colorful mariner from Isle La Motte, Vermont. On his last voyage from the island, Capt. Montgomery was headed for Burlington's marble manufacturing shed with a load of stone. On board was a crewman, a quarryman with an eye injury going for medical treatment, and two teenage girls, the captain's teenage daughter and her friend. Leaving the island in early December, they obviously did not anticipate encountering a monstrous early winter storm, but on December 7 they ran directly into a gale.

The *General Butler* had been declared uninsurable the previous year and, while approaching Burlington from the north, her steering mechanism broke. The captain ordered his big anchor dropped, and while held into the face of the storm, jury rigged a tiller bar in an attempt to gain enough steerage to make it safely into harbor. He cut the anchor line and drifted to the south end of the breakwater, where the force of the waves was so great it repeatedly lifted the ship up on top of the structure. Montgomery realized the ship was doomed and with each crashing contact

he dropped his human cargo onto the breakwater's ice covered stones. By all accounts the captain was the last to leave the ship, and upon his departure the *General Butler* sat back into the trough and sank.

The lake was so rough that, for the first time that season the steamer *A. Williams*, which operated from Burlington, was forced to cancel its trips. The harbor was lined with people who were watching the drama unfold and they now saw the five shipwreck survivors in a truly precarious position. They were huddled atop the breakwater being drenched with each new wave and dying of exposure. After so narrow an escape they would have all perished if it had, not been for the heroic intervention of James Wakefield, the Burlington ship chandler, and his son. The Wakefields, seeing the situation for what it was, took a 14' rowboat and hurried out to the spot and saved all of their lives. Cora Montgomery and the others were given medical treatment and when finally regaining her senses "...showed a goodly degree of Yankee grit, for the first question she asked on returning to consciousness was that she might be allowed to make the return trip when the schooner would be raised."

The *General Butler* was never raised, but after her discovery and study in 1985, she became the first shipwreck in the Vermont Underwater Historic Preserve program. The *General Butler* and the *O.J. Walker* are now both open to divers and each provides an extraordinary window into the evolution of North American watercraft and 19th century life on Lake Champlain.

Building of the Canal Schooner *Lois McClure*

From the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum



How does a team of boat builders and volunteers go about designing and building a schooner from the mid-19th century when none exist on the surface today? You turn to a talented group of naval architects and historians. Since their underwater discovery in the 1980s, both schooners, the *General Butler* and the *O.J. Walker*, have been studied and documented. Field notes have been painstakingly transformed into archaeological reports. It was these reports that were handed over to naval architect Ron A. Smith to create the plans necessary to build the *Lois McClure*. In the spring of 2002, boatbuilders Rob Thompson, Paul Rollins, Steve Page, and Lianna Tennal began the difficult job of lofting the schooner. As they began this process they quickly realized that certain details of the schooner's shape were not true to the 1862 class. The decision was made to redesign the boat, but in this case they thought it would be helpful to design and loft at the same time,

Using a combination of historical photographs, archeological information, and their own experience of what is possible to do with wood, the boatbuilders began to draw the boat's lines. One of the key pieces of information proved to be the location of the ends of the chine log, representing the change in the boat from the hard chined box shape to the more curvaceous bow and stern. In the bow they also had the width of the deck for the first 20' as recorded from the wreck of the *O.J. Walker*. The stern of the boat proved to be more challenging as the 1862 class sailing canal boat had an extremely complex transom. Here they relied heavily on period photographs and a few critical hull shape measurements made from the wrecks by divers. After multiple revisions a shape emerged that agreed with all the sources. A few weeks later the builders had an opportunity to become certified SCUBA divers and dive on the wreck of the *O.J. Walker* themselves. Much to their

relief, the shape they saw 60' down in Lake Champlain was very close to that on the lofting floor. They could finally put down pens and pencils, pick up chisels and saws, and get to work.

Construction began in earnest in the spring of 2002. Large timbers, including the chine logs, keel, and keelson had to be scarfed, or joined together to make full length pieces. The bottom of the boat was built as a unit and was built upside down in order to make bottom planking easier to fasten into place. Once this unit of chine logs, floors, keel, keelson, and bottom planking was assembled, it needed to be flipped over into the proper orientation. Craig Brown of Brown's Welding was hired and the 70' long by 14.5' wide pancake-like structure was flipped without incident. From this point, it didn't take long for large timbers like the stem and sternpost to be added, giving staff and visitors alike a glimpse into the shape and scale of the schooner.



Canal schooners were built with an unusual joint called a wedged dovetail joint. Similar to the way a timber frame house is built, each frame and floor has a dovetail tenon cut on one end. The chine is mortised out at each place a floor or frame intersects with it. The tenon is inserted into the mortise, then driven over to lock the dovetail. A wedge is then driven alongside the frame to hold it all in place. While the middle 60' or so of the schooner is square in section, the bow and stern have more traditional curves. Where the chines end, sawn frames are assembled and put in place, completing the shape of the boat. The fall of 2002 was spent fitting the shelf, a structural timber that both fastens frames together and supports the deck beams, and adding some deck beams to tie the structure together.

Staff and volunteers returned to the Shipyard in May of 2003 to begin the final season of construction. There was a mountain of work yet to do. With as many as 10 people a day, usually more volunteers than employees, 2003 was spent planking the hull, fitting most of the deck beams and sheer clamp, milling and installing all of the decking, designing and building hatch coamings, hatch covers, bulwarks, and the stern cabin. Most materials have been sourced locally, spruce from Vermont, white oak from Vermont and New York, pine and cedar from Vermont and Maine. Recycled mahogany, however, came from NASA. As the fall of 2003 drew near, with more than 60,000 visitors and school children visiting the site over three years, the light at the end of the tunnel could be seen.

The 2004 season started back at the Burlington Shipyard with completing the construction of the boat, finishing the rigging, and caulking, and painting the hull. Now all was set in motion for the July 3rd launch!

Educational Curriculum of Canal Boat Life

The Lake Champlain Maritime Museum (LCMM) has launched a Vermont and New York standards-based educational program about canal boat life on the Northern Waterway this fall. The core of the project is a newly developed curriculum by LCMM staff called "Canalers Afloat: The Champlain Waterway's Unique Maritime Community, 1819-1940." The goal of this large scale project is to bring to life the rich history of the Champlain Waterway by imaginatively educating and exposing children to canal boat life as well as providing interpretation for the 88' replica canal schooner, *Lois McClure*, the Museum has constructed over the past three years.

The canal boat life education program is based on historical and archaeological research conducted by LCMM staff over the past two decades. Some of this work has been highlighted in two recent Museum publications: *Lake Champlain's Sailing Canal Boats: An Illustrated Journey from Burlington Bay to the Hudson River* (November 2003), written by the Museum's Executive Director, Arthur B. Cohn; and *Life on a Canal Boat: The Journals of Theodore Bartley (1861-1889)*, edited by Russell Bellico with contributions by LCMM Executive Director Arthur B. Cohn and published by Purple Mountain Press (July 2004). Bartley's journals, being released in conjunction with the launching of the canal schooner, provide an extraordinary window into the forgotten world of the canal boat era, offering a daily record of life and business onboard a canal boat. The original handwritten journals, located at the Ticonderoga Historical Society, were transcribed by great-granddaughter-in-law Barbara Bartley. This abridged volume covers 29 years and is profusely illustrated with maps and historic images bringing to life the Bartley's daily experience.

The educational program surrounding the canal schooner this fall will consist of the recently developed curriculum along with a traveling classroom kit, which will serve as the framework and support the classroom experience before students attend an educational tour aboard LCMM's 88' replica canal schooner, the *Lois McClure*. Additional educational programming at LCMM sites and outreach programs in the classroom will be used to further build upon the experience. The curriculum, in conjunction with the schooner tour, will bring to life the rich history of the canal boat era. The curriculum promises to captivate students of all ages and increase their understanding of and appreciation for a largely forgotten but significant chapter in American and regional commercial history.

The curriculum uses a selection of primary and secondary documents, oral history, archaeology, and historic images to represent the diverse community of northern canalers. The voices of men, women, and children who were members and observers of the northern canalers are all represented, providing a broad view of the canal boat community. The 15 units, geared towards students in grades K-8, are multi-disciplinary and meet a broad range of education standards including the arts, language and literature, math, science and technology, and history and social sciences. Stu-

dents will explore canal boat culture through travel narratives, journals, oral testimony, historic images, and material culture. They will learn from, and create, stories, poems, songs, and artwork about canal boat life. Using historical methodology, students will make interpretations about canal boating as well as study changes caused by commercial activities to lakeside communities, the environment, and canal boat design and cargo. *Canalers Afloat: the Champlain Waterway's Unique Maritime Community, 1819-1940* was due to be available in September of 2004.

The McClure Donation



Lois McClure with painting.

The McClure family has always expressed great support for the mission and activities of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. In 1998 their enthusiasm for the museum resulted in a large gift with several objectives.

The museum would create an exciting project on the Burlington waterfront.

The museum located at Basin Harbor would gain exposure from the Burlington project.

The project would honor Lois' lifelong love of Lake Champlain.

From this wonderful initiative the Burlington Schooner Project was born. This permitted the museum, with the help of the Lake Champlain Transportation Company, a generous community of donors and an army of volunteers to establish a shipyard at the historic King Street Ferry Dock and build, over the last three years, a full size working replica of an 1862 class canal schooner.

Along the way the McClures have continued their generosity to the museum by additional financial support, which included the funding of the publication "*Lake Champlain's Sailing Canal Boats: An Illustrated Journey from Burlington Bay to the Hudson River*." Pleased with the success of the book and the growing energy and potential around the schooner, particularly in engaging young people, the McClure family has stepped forward to fund the distribution of the *Lake Champlain Sailing Canal Boat* book to all school libraries in Franklin, Grand Isle, Chittenden, and Addison Counties.

We are saddened by the recent loss of Mac McClure, who has done so much to enrich our community and the museum, but have grown to value the wisdom, guidance, and support that Lois McClure brings to the museum. This project would not have happened without the support of the McClure family and we are honored to have Lois McClure's name grace the new schooner.

The California Delta is a 1,000-mile maze of waterways that is formed at the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers, the two great rivers that drain the northern and southern portions of the state's central valley. Most of the meandering sloughs and interesting places are to be found off the San Joaquin River, which flows north; the Sacramento is the larger of the two rivers but it cuts a rather singular channel. The Sacramento and the San Joaquin join together just above the town of Antioch and together flow through the Carquinez Straits into San Pablo Bay and then into San Francisco Bay.

The Delta waterways have a great tidal range, and while the flow of the rivers is generally down toward the Bay, it is not uncommon for the water to be flowing upriver on the flood tide. The water flowing through the sloughs can move as fast as 5 or 6 knots, making navigation tricky, especially in a slow-moving sailboat.

With such large tidal flows running aground, or finding oneself aground in a once deep anchorage, is not uncommon. The tulle-lined sloughs offer literally thousands of anchorages, and on a summer weekend one finds the more popular spots packed with boats of all types and sizes.

In the summer winds are usually light in the morning, building to near gale force in the late afternoon and then subsiding as the temperatures decline towards sunset. The sail to the Delta from San Francisco Bay is usually a long run with an occasional broad reach, making the trip pleasant and fast. The trip back is usually one long beat against strong winds and a nasty chop. It is easy to find crew for the trip up to the Delta, crew are more scarce for the trip home.

The Tide Waits for No One

Our plan was to catch the beginning of the flood tide and ride it all the way from Berkeley to Antioch, a trip of about 30 miles. Slack water at the Golden Gate was at 0907, or something like 0930 at Berkeley. The tide left on time. We did not. Still, we were not doing too badly and by 1030 we had the boat laden and ready to go. The beer was on ice, bags of snacks were within easy reach, and a light breeze from the west made our departure from Berkeley a pleasant one.

Contrary to our expectations, the breeze was light all day, and without the flood tide we never would have made Antioch. Our Olson 25, *Take Five*, is a pretty fast small boat, but it was heavily laden and for most of the day not very aggressively sailed. But what we lacked in sailing style, we made up in sunbaked indifference.

Aside from a couple of oil tankers and a Coast Guard patrol boat we had San Pablo Bay all to ourselves, one advantage of leaving on the Thursday after the Fourth of July weekend. The open waters and 10-12 knot breeze meant that flying the spinnaker was pretty stress-free. It was the skipper's job to keep the sail full; the crew were too relaxed to be bothered much with sail trim. Eventually an uneasy truce was worked out between the snoozing crew and the unlucky stiff who had to drive. Whoever had to endure the "tyranny of the tiller" would be kept supplied with cold drinks and fresh snacks, but otherwise the crew would be left alone to pursue their relaxing with determination.

Delta Trip

By John Tuma

By the time we reached Martinez, about 25 miles from Berkeley and perhaps six miles up the Carquinez Straits, the tide had begun to turn and the light wind had started to fade. Craig, who was driving at the time, called for a douse and fired up the little Nissan 5 outboard. I had been asleep on the quarter berth, but the thundering racket from the transom mounted outboard quickly sent me back out into the hot sun. The Nissan 5 is not a particularly quiet motor and the transom on the Olson 25 acts as a large sounding board, efficiently amplifying the sound of the motor and then transmitting it directly to the quarter berths.

As I arrived on deck Rick, the third member of our group, was quietly reading in the shadow of the mainsail. Rick and I pulled down the limp spinnaker but left the jib furled on deck. Craig had now turned his attention from the motor to his 35 yards of fishing line which, after dragging in the water at about 5 knots for three hours, was a hopeless tangle about 12' long. No fish on the menu tonight.

We motored for about an hour, trying to stay out of the main current, but a light land breeze blew up out of the east just before sunset and we were able to sail the last mile or so up through the New York Slough and into the Antioch marina with the main and the 150% genoa. It was slow going against the current, but the water was smooth, the wind was warm, and the pink colors in the sky made for a dramatic finish to a fine day of sailing.

Rick prepared a quick dinner of burritos over the alcohol stove, a bit of rum was shared around, and the three of us were off to bed. Now I know this looks like the end of the story for the first day, but it's not. When three full-size guys are sharing the sleeping space inside a 25' boat, sleeping is not always the easiest thing to do. Most importantly, it is essential that the guy who snores the loudest not fall asleep first, otherwise there is no rest for anyone else. Rick is a world champion snorer and he has the unique ability to fall asleep without delay. It's a scary prospect, but after 12 hours in the hot sun, neither Craig nor I were much deterred in our own efforts to sleep, and I only had to wake two or three times to poke Rick, who was sleeping in the quarter berth opposite.

It's Different in the Delta

The three of us were up early despite the long day before. But we were in no hurry, as the tide would not start to flood until almost 1000. We breakfasted on cereal and coffee and even had a chance to explore around the marina. At the time the Antioch marina was quite new. There wasn't much to see beyond a few vintage wooden motor boats kept in the covered berths at the back of the marina. Our only chore for the morning was to pick up some ice, which we got in abundance in the expectation of a long hot day and a night spent on the hook.

Calculating the tides in the Delta is a tricky business and our navigator, yours truly, was not very good at it. We were underway right about the time I figured we should have been, but the tides apparently didn't make the calculation the same way that I did.

We had a nice breeze blowing down river, just enough to make a bit of headway against the ebb tide with the main and the 150% genoa. Progress was steady, if a bit slow, but the breeze was warm and the water was flat as we short tacked the channel under the Antioch Bridge. An hour later we were still short tacking the channel within hailing distance of the bridge, the breeze was dying, the ebb was persistent, and the crew was restless and irritable. Discipline was quickly eroding, mutiny was in the air. I called for a tack. Rick, usually an easygoing sort of fellow, stood up slowly, an animal glare in his eye, and in one quick, fluid motion ripped open the rope clutch and dropped the jib which Craig (mutinous scum) quickly gathered in. That was the last sailing breeze we would see for almost two days. With the motor running and the ebb finally going slack, we slowly left the Antioch Bridge behind and started into the meandering channels that make up the Delta.

The day was getting hot and it got hotter as we worked our way upriver. Back in Berkeley, as we were readying the boat the day before, an old guy down the dock had told me that we'd start the trip wearing full foul weather gear, that we'd be down to shorts and shirtsleeves by Vallejo, and that the clothes would keep coming off as we worked inland. "By the time we make it to the Delta proper," I joked in response, "we'll be naked!"

"Yep," he replied.

As we motored slowly up toward False River just after noon, the temperature climbed up past the century mark. Off to port we noticed a young lady waterskiing. She wore a flotation vest and nothing else. We'd arrived.

We had no plan other than to enjoy the scenery, and since none of us had ever been up in the Delta by boat before it didn't much matter where we went. Craig suggested we take the False River up past Frank's Tract and then into the Old River, from which we could rejoin the San Joaquin River. This seemed a good plan. All shipping traffic stayed in the main river channel, and as we had only a 4.5' draft, most of the smaller channels and sloughs were open to us.

Frank's Tract used to be an island (Frank's Island?) but a levee breach sometime in the past submerged the island, leaving a large inland lake surrounded by tules. From our vantage point on the deck of a small boat we could only catch the occasional glimpse of the Tract through the tules, but I decided that the best course would be to remain in the channel of the False River. Not all of the openings from the channel into the Tract are navigable, and the chart indicates that "numerous submerged snags and piles exist in the Tract." Despite the hazards, the Andreas Cove Yacht Club used to hold the Frank's Tract Regatta there every year and the submerged hazards were just part of the fun.

Upon reaching the Old River, which borders Frank's Tract on the east side, we decided to head back to the main river channel. Our plan was to find a quiet spot somewhere in the tules along the Middle River and drop anchor for the night. While reasonably certain at the time that we went the right way, subsequent investigations have led me to conclude that we didn't actually find Middle River and that we did not anchor out just below Columbia Cut, as previously believed.

From the low deck of a small boat, a lot of the tule-lined channels look the same. So with the benefit of hindsight, experience, and most importantly GPS, I can conclusively say that we had inadvertently found our way into either Disappointment Slough or Little Connection Slough. There is almost no chance that we were in Potato Slough. (Navigational expertise such as mine cannot be learned, it is a gift.)

One of the great things about messing about in the Delta is that it really doesn't matter much where you are, unless, of course, you are trying to get somewhere, as long as you can find your way back. The hot days and the meandering watercourses quickly wash away the hustle and bustle frame of mind and after a couple of days it's hard to remember what day it is and why you really need to care. It is the really elemental things in life that become important, like keeping the head pumped out and keeping the beer cold.

After motoring for close to five hours, we finally found a secluded little slough that offered a nice spot to anchor out. Normally anchoring in the Delta is done with either the bow or the stern tied into the bank and an anchor is set off the other end of the boat to keep it in place. But the slough we were in was quite narrow and very deep (nine meters where the stern anchor would have been dropped). Because of the narrowness of the slough we chose to anchor parallel to the bank with an anchor off each end of the boat.

Sunset was spectacular with the sun going down in a blaze of pinks and oranges to the west while the big moon was rising over the corn fields to the east. And despite the heat of the day, which had been well over 100 degrees, a light breeze blowing over the water cooled the night off pleasantly.

After a fine dinner of spaghetti, salad, red wine, and bread, the three of us sat around the cockpit smoking cigars and discussing our plan for the following day. Tide math is hard, especially up in all the little sloughs. The water in the sloughs doesn't start moving at the same time as the water in the river, and the deviation depends a lot on the strength of the tide and the distance from a known location. And, it turns out, the distance from a known location depends a lot on knowing where one is. So with our intellects lubricated by the effects of the wine, the cigars, and the long day in the sun, we all agreed that the ebb would start around 0900, which was comfortably late enough that we would be able to sleep in.

With the exception of the crickets singing and the occasional buzzing of a mosquito, all seemed quiet as we turned in. At the last moment I decided to leave the running lights and the steaming lights on, even though it wasn't a legal lighting arrangement. *Take Five* didn't have an anchoring light but I figured illegal was better than invisible. Good thing, too. About midnight we were awakened by the roar of an outboard motor. We scurried up on deck just in time to see a bass boat go flying by at 40mph, metal flake glinting in the moonlight. They were running with no lights and the two guys aboard were a whoopin' and a hollerin', we could practically smell their breath over the exhaust from the outboard.

Not 200 yards from where we were anchored the slough made a sharp turn to the

left. The guys in the bass boat didn't. There was a great crashing and crunching of fiberglass as the boat hit the levee, the motor sputtered, coughed a little bit, then died. All was silent, even the crickets. Just about the time that Rick, Craig, and I were starting to consider raising anchor and investigating, the guys in the bass boat recovered their wits and let a huge storm of invective that continued unabated for several minutes. They were okay.

Now I know it isn't right or proper to take great pleasure in other people's suffering, but all three of us felt a tremendous sense of satisfaction about their misfortune once we realized that they weren't badly hurt. Our punishment for such gloating was swift and severe. After the bass boys stopped cursing, they managed to coax their damaged outboard back into sputtering life. The grinding of fiberglass on rock as they backed out was testimony to how far up the bank they had gone. Then, for some puzzling reason, the bass boys chose to motor our way, pulling into the bank not 100' from where we were anchored, where they commenced to drinking and pounding with a hammer on their damaged equipment. This went on for about an hour, at which point I think they finally passed out.

If that weren't bad enough, by the time they finally quieted down, Rick had already fallen asleep and was snoring loud enough to rival the roar of the bass boat's outboard. Poking and prodding would stop the symphony for a time but inevitably, just as I was drifting off to sleep, it would start again. While annoying, the time I spent trying to hurry up and sleep proved fruitful, as I realized that the ebb started earlier further up river and that we needed to get underway at 0500. With this comforting thought I tossed and turned fitfully for the remaining three hours until it was time to get up.

Defining Moments...

Or Ice and Other Emergencies

Morning is a wonderful time of day if you can get past how early you need to get up to see it. The air was still and cool and fresh. The moon was already set and the sun was just coming up. It was going to be another glorious day.

The ebb had already started, proving that even with my late night epiphany the math was still not right. I got up as quietly as I could, which was silly since the clatter of the Nissan 5 would make sleep impossible for anyone down below. As the current was coming from the bow, I let the boat drift down over the stern anchor and both Rick and Craig emerged from the cabin before I had the anchor aboard.

"What's up?" asked Craig.

"Ebb's already started," I replied. Grunts all around. Rick got the bow anchor aboard as I got the motor going and Craig started the essential job of making coffee.

The bass boat boys peeked dully over the gunwale of their boat as we slid out into the current. A large gash stretched from the bow halfway down the starboard side of their boat. The three of us stood in silent salute as we motored past, hats held firmly over our hearts, great achievements such as theirs should not go unacknowledged.

With the aid of the current we quickly made our way back into the main channel of the San Joaquin River. Our plan was to stay

in the river and take advantage of the current for as long as possible. We stopped briefly at Korths Harbor, which is at the confluence of the Mokelumne and San Joaquin Rivers, to see if we could get ice and a bit of breakfast, but the ice machine was locked and we were too early to get food (it was still only 0630 on a Saturday morning). After taking advantage of a portable head that had kindly been left for us at the construction site next door, we got back on the boat and continued on down the River.

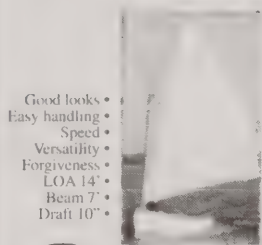
Our destination for the day was the Vallejo Marina, about 30 miles downriver from where we started. The day was very hot, without a breath of wind. We put the main up in any case just to create a bit of shade on deck, but the genoa was left furled on deck. The day took on a bit of a monotonous tone. By the time it was late enough to drink beer, the day was already too hot. The cabin was too warm to be comfortable and the Nissan's dreary drone made the cabin too loud to sleep, in any case. Rick and I took turns most of the morning driving the boat, dipping our feet in the water, and hanging out in the shade of the sail. Craig had somehow made himself comfortable sleeping on the furled genoa out in the sun, and after a couple of hours he was pretty well cooked.

On every adventure there are moments that define the experience. You might think that one such moment would have been when the gas supply began to give out just after we had passed under the Benicia Bridge. It was about 2:30 in the afternoon, the tide had turned, there was still no wind, and the sputtering engine wasn't providing enough power to prevent the current from setting us down onto one of the bridge pylons. We had more gas aboard and should have refilled the gas tank before we approached the bridge, but didn't. Yes, you might think that this was a defining moment, seeing as how it captured both our excellent preparation (having extra fuel on board) and our idiotic execution (choosing not to refill the tank before trying to navigate past the only significant obstruction for two miles in either direction). But it wasn't.

No, the defining moment, the one that really illustrates our mettle and determination when faced with serious, almost calamitous, circumstances, came a few moments later. As Craig was putting the now empty spare gas tank away, he discovered that the beer was getting frighteningly warm. Our ice had given up hours earlier. It was still 105 degrees out on the water, the high temperature in Martinez that day was 112 degrees. Our weekend faced near certainty of ruination from the spoilt beer. Just the thought of such hardship was enough to make us really thirsty.

There was but one thing to do, fuel economy be damned, this was a crisis. We had motored close to 75 miles on just six gallons of gas in the prior two-and-a-half days, we used about a 1/2-gallon of our 2-1/2-gallon reserve to cover the last mile to the Martinez Marina. Good thing, too, we got the very last bag of ice at the marina, and a sorrier specimen would have been hard to find. It was half melted and decidedly droopy, but it was still almost cold. We happily paid for our prize, bought some ice cream treats to celebrate our success, and then headed back to the boat. In the five minutes we were at the marina, no fewer than three other patrons

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came by looking for ice. But for our bold initiative and decisive execution, we would have been seriously out of luck.

The hot weather we experienced that weekend is not typical. Usually the wind blows really hard from the west through the Carquinez Strait, which keeps the temperatures down along the water, even when it is hot inland. With the near gale winds blowing, one can either try to bash out against the current and the wind, which keeps the chop down a bit, or use the ebb current to help fight the wind but at the cost of larger chop. Either way, it is usually very wet and uncomfortable and cold.

As we were leaving the Martinez Marina a slight breeze filled in, enough to encourage us to raise the genoa and motor sail up the Strait. I don't know if tacking back and forth using both motor and sails was any faster than just motoring against the current, but it was still better than sitting idly with the motor running. The breeze finally started to cool things off but it wasn't so strong that the ride was wet and lumpy. With the current in our face though, it was slow and it took us about three hours to cover the last six miles from Martinez to Vallejo.

Dinner that night was at a fine little Mexican restaurant adjacent to the Vallejo Marina. After the long day in the sun the chips and salsa, accompanied by cold margaritas, were very welcome and it was with a sense of great contentment that the three of us rolled back onto the boat and into our bunks for a long and quiet sleep.

However, things did not work out quite that way. About 2300 or so Rick rolled onto his back and started snoring with real gusto. I poked him a few times, but inevitably the snoring would return. This went on for about half an hour at which point Rick let loose with a particularly loud, camel-like bleat. Craig, who was up in the V-berth, erupted into a fit of laughter, and though he tried to choke it back, with each subsequent camel snort he would start laughing all over again. Craig's laughter was contagious and pretty soon we were both holding our breath trying to regain our composure while waiting for the next nasal blast.

After 15 minutes of this I had tears running down my face and my sides were hurting from laughing so hard. Eventually Rick woke up because our laughter was so loud and asked, "What's so funny?" "Nothing," we replied, choking back the tears, "go back to sleep." Rick rolled over, which stopped the camel snort for a time, but he soon ended up on his back, with predictable results.

By the time Rick started snoring once more I had calmed down enough that I was able to control my mirth, but at the first sign of trouble, Craig was lost. He tried hard not to burst out laughing, employing all the standard techniques, biting his tongue, pinching himself, chewing on the anchor chain, but with only limited success. Finally, overwhelmed by the futility of his efforts, he crawled through the forward hatch and out on the foredeck and started laughing uproariously. Craig lit a cigarette and tried to calm down, but every time Rick would let loose a bleat, I would hear a peal of laughter from out on the foredeck. I eventually fell asleep, for all I know Craig might have spent the entire night out on the deck trying to make peace with the situation.

Fair Winds Home

Once again our plan was to get an early start and catch some of the ebb to help get home. So by 0900 we had breakfasted, showered, and were underway. The tide was still ebbing, but just barely. As we motored out of the channel from the Vallejo Marina, a light breeze blew up out of the north, so we set the main and the big genoa on starboard tack and had a brilliant sail across San Pablo Bay. The day had started cooler than the previous two and it felt as though the high pressure system that had settled over the Bay Area was finally breaking down.

That day sailing across San Pablo Bay was one of the finest sails I have ever had. The sun was warm, the breeze was steady at about 12 knots, the water was flat, the crew were relaxed, and the coffee was black and hot. Even though we missed most of the ebb, we made good time crossing the Bay.

San Pablo Bay is joined to San Francisco Bay through the San Pablo Strait, which runs between Point San Pablo to the southeast and Point San Pedro to the northwest. The wind started to get light and fluky as we sailed though the strait and by the time we reached The Brothers, two islands just west of Point San Pablo, the wind had died all together. Rick and Craig got the genoa down and I started up the motor once again, hoping that we would have enough gas to motor against the current all the way back to Berkeley, a distance of about nine miles.

As we neared the Richmond San Rafael Bridge, a light westerly started to fill in, suggesting that the high pressure system had broken down. Normally in the summer hot weather inland creates a low pressure area over the Central Valley as the hot air rises and cooler, heavier marine air gets sucked in through the Golden Gate and the Carquinez Straits to fill that low pressure zone.

However, during the time we had been in the Delta, the Pacific High, which usually sits out over the eastern Pacific, had shifted east over Nevada, blocking the typical summer winds and allowing the whole area to heat up, creating a vast low pressure area. As the high pressure system to the east broke down and the Pacific High reestablished itself out over the eastern Pacific, cooling air once again started to flow inland, and with a vengeance.

In five minutes the wind went from near zero to 15 knots and it was clear that it was going to keep on building. Craig and I quickly got the 150% genoa off the foredeck and hanked on the #3 jib. We contemplated sailing with the full main, but in the few minutes that it took us to change the sail the wind had increased to 20 knots. We tucked in a reef and reset the main. Rick had been driving, but with the main up and the wind on the beam, the boat was getting difficult to steer. I took over driving as Rick and Craig put up the small jib. No worries about having enough gas to get home!

Our course from the Bridge ran south southeast past Red Rock, a small island on the south side of the Richmond Bridge, and then southeast across the Berkeley Circle into Berkeley. As we made that final turn for home just past Southhampton Shoal, the wind had increased to 25 knots, with gusts higher. The wind waves had built up to about 4' and though we were not sailing an optimal course in relation to the waves, there was so much

power in the wind that we were able to surf down the larger wave fronts. Woo-hoo!

While we were rushing to get back to Berkeley and out of the wind, a steady stream of sailboats were rushing out to take advantage of the wind after three days of calm conditions. We watched in amazement as boats attempted to beat their way out from behind the breakwater. As soon as they cleared the breakwater and were subjected to the full force of the wind, they would heel way over, two got completely knocked down. The boats sailing out were all heeled over at least 25 degrees and most were flying their smallest jib (or no jib) and had as many reefs as they could find tucked in.

We made Berkeley at about 1400 in the afternoon. The wind continued to build and I heard later that sustained winds of 35 knots were recorded on the Bay with gusts to 40 knots. Although we were all tired and had a long drive to get home, all efforts to put the boat away were quickly suspended in favor

of watching boats leaving and then returning to the harbor from the vantage point of the breakwater. A dozen boats that we had seen beating their way out came limping back into the harbor with shredded sails. The worst was a blue Santa Cruz 27, the entire mainsail had been reduced to streamers flying from the mast.

Despite the carnage, desperate wind-starved sailors continued to try to get in a quick afternoon sail. The most dramatic moment was when a large schooner, perhaps 50' on deck, attempted to motor out of the harbor. Three times they tried to clear the south end of the breakwater, and each time the boat was driven back by the wind and the waves. On the third try they managed to get the bow of the boat into the wind, but to no avail. The waves had built to more than 6' just outside the harbor entrance, and every time the schooner would start forward the waves would drive the bow skyward. It would hang for a moment as if suspend in air, and as the wave

rolled past the bow would plunge and the whole boat would shudder as the forward part of the keel grounded on the bottom.

As terrifying as this was to watch from shore, one can only imagine what was going through the head of the poor sap who had been sent up onto the bowsprit to help set the jib. He was clinging to the forestay for dear life, and each time the boat plunged down we thought for sure he would be thrown from his perch. Finally, after what seemed an eternity, Captain Bligh relented and agreed to return to the dock where he could flog his crew in comparative safety. After that, a few boats continued to straggle back into the harbor but no one else seemed willing to try and leave.

With the show over, we finished cleaning up *Take Five*, made a final pot of coffee to celebrate our safe return, and went our separate ways. Our trip had a bit of everything, good sailing, bad sailing, good food, good beer, and good company. We learned a lot, too, next time we go with ear plugs.

In late August 2004 the "Matinicus Two" decided, again, to venture eastward, against lots of sound advice offered at home. At age 52, Bob Porter was highly motivated, knowing that he might not have many years of strong paddling remaining. The fact that I, his partner, am 75 and still recovering from prostate surgery was only a minor distraction.

The weather report for the third week of August on the Maine coast was promising. Little rain or fog were predicted Tuesday through Thursday. We decided to take two single kayaks, not the Pygmy double that I had prepared. Our stroke styles were different and synchronized paddling might prove tough.

The town hall ladies in Tenants Harbor kindly provided parking for our two vehicles and we launched our boats about noon on

Return to Matinicus

By Chuck Jones

Tuesday, having come north from Auburn. Shortly after leaving the harbor we realized we were fighting a strong foul tide/current that we had not considered. The lobster pots were vibrating in a 2-3kt current and some wind, both trying to push us north of our course. Bob, leading the parade as we struggled on, began correcting our course toward Little Green. Further south Metinic was visible on our right. It seemed to be moving offshore with us, our progress was so slow. The 10+ miles to Little Green took us about three hours of hard paddling. We took a brief

rest on a rocky beach and began to worry about getting to Matinicus before dark!

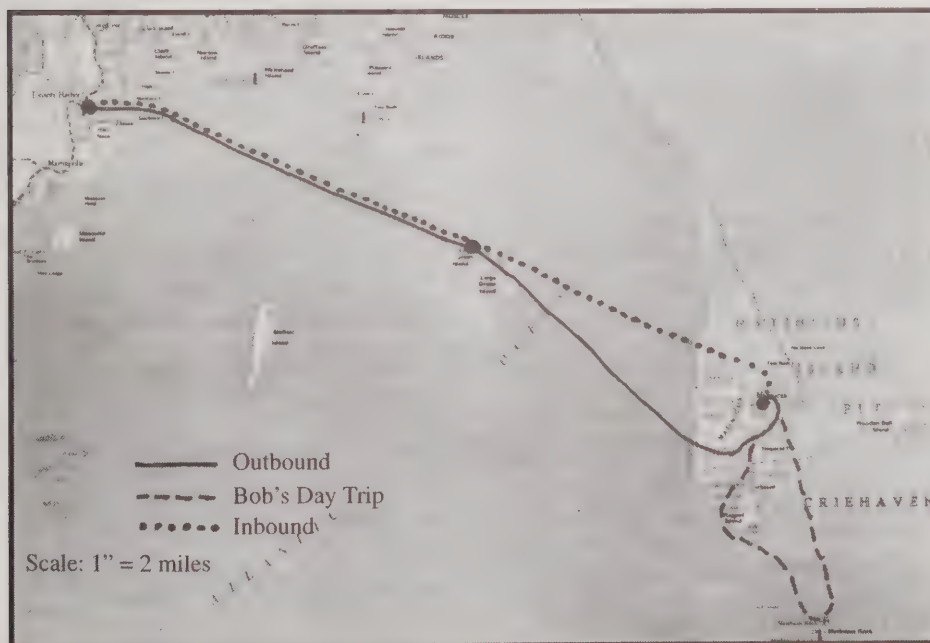
We left finally from the north side of Large Green, headed to the south end of Matinicus. The adverse tide and light wind plagued us until we went up the east coast of Matinicus to the harbor close to the north end. It was about 6:00pm and we beat the sunset. However, we were exhausted. After a restful night at Bill Hoadley's Tuckaneck Lodge, things improved.

Wednesday morning Bob had recovered enough to paddle to Matinicus Rock and Criehaven. I chose some walking therapy, to the post office, Markey Beach (north end), and the airstrip. My kayak also seemed happy to rest on the path by the post office and harbor.

Thursday morning we headed out for the north end of Matinicus and, from there, to the north end of Large Green. We were about to land on its rocky beach when a "hostile native" came up in his lobster boat and announced, "Private property, no landing, etc., etc... Go to Little Green." This was not our first encounter with this hostile clan. We did go on to the messy stone beach on Little Green and had a humble lunch.

The second leg of the return trip, Little Green to Tenants Harbor, gave us some rolling seas and headwinds toward the end, but not like the trip out. We retrieved our vehicles from the town hall, loaded up, and headed south for Moody's Diner in Waldoboro! As we later came out of Moody's, a young couple from Bar Harbor were inspecting my Pygmy "H.P." in its rack on the truck. They were building an "H.P." (High Performance) like mine at their home! They hope to start a kayak outfitter venture by next year. We wished them well and told them to visit Matinicus some time!

I told Bob at the end of the trip that Monhegan might be on my "maybe list" next year, but Matinicus was now on my "fly out only" list, if at all, interesting as it may be. It is like a siren call luring some ancient paddler to a watery grave. This year I escaped.



Growing up in southwest Ohio in the 1950s and '60s I never thought I would develop a passion for small boat sailing, but in the summer of 1956 the State of Ohio completed a 1,200' earthen dam across tiny Four Mile Creek north of Oxford, Ohio, and created Acton Lake in Hueston Woods State Park. When the dam was completed, the project engineers told area residents that it might take a year or more for the lake to fill up, but we had a wet winter and spring and the lake of about 650 acres (just over one square mile) sprang to life in a matter of weeks. We had our puddle!

Because the lake was so small, and out of concern for safety, the state put a low horsepower limit on powerboats. This power limit allowed for small fishing boats, but banned high powered speed boats, so water skiing was out of the question. To this day, a 10hp limit remains in effect.

Almost from its inception Acton Lake, and the surrounding Hueston Woods State Park, was a huge success and, it being the only lake in that part of the state, people from all over the area flocked to it to swim, fish, and sail. Docks were built and to rent a slip for the summer meant camping out all night at the park office the night before the rentals went on sale for the following season (a ritual I went through on more than one occasion). On a hot summer day the swimming beach looked like Coney Island, and when a kid in the crowd turned up missing (a regular occurrence), the lifeguards would clear the water and get volunteers to form a human chain to search the murky lake bottom of the swimming area. In most cases, the missing kid was found in the human chain looking for himself in the best Mark Twain Huck Finn tradition.

Despite the muddy water and questionable swimming skills of many of the park goers, it was decades before there was an actual drowning and the safety record of the lake remains remarkably good despite the hundreds of thousands of visitors who use the park each year, a real tribute to wisdom of a horsepower restriction on a small lake. Another safety feature of the lake was a ban on swimming in other than the supervised swim-

In Praise of Midwest Puddle Sailing

By Alan Glos

ming area, but it was amazing how often boaters "fell out" of boats mid-lake on particularly hot days.

So where does the sailing part come in? I suppose that it finally dawned on people that if one can't water ski or bomb around a lake in a high powered motorboat, sailing might be the next best thing, and Acton Lake soon became the Mecca of small boat sailing and racing for most of southwest Ohio. Small one-design boats were the most popular and it was not long before there were active fleets of Rebels, Thistles, Rhodes Bantams, Windmills, and Y-Flyers. Sunfish, Lasers, and Hobie Cats came later. Somebody tried to sail a Star class keel boat once but soon found out that the launching area was too shallow to accommodate the fixed keel, and thus centerboarders ruled. In the winter there were even a few DN iceboats to be seen bombing up and down the lake at breakneck speeds.

In the early days of the lake most of the boats were wooden, and many were home-built from kits or from scratch. Each spring the hulls would reappear with fresh paint and varnish lovingly applied over the winter by their proud owners and there seemed to be an unofficial contest to see who could launch the best maintained boat each spring. Fiberglass eventually triumphed over wood as most of the one-design classes made the transition to modern building materials, but a few of the woodies remain to this day. My own boats were wooden, and the skills I learned in making repairs and doing annual maintenance were the basis of another lifelong interest in small boat restoration. Score one more for the puddle in the middle of nowhere.

It seems to be a law of nature that when sailboats gather, racing is inevitable, and before long, the Hueston Sailing Association (HSA) was formed. The HSA was one of those wonderful paper yacht clubs that owned

no waterfront property but was peopled with members who shared a love for small boat sailing. The HSA did own a small motorized barge that served as a race committee boat and an even smaller aluminum crash boat that helped fish the unfortunate out of the drink after a capsize. Each of the HSA members had to staff the committee and crash boat once or twice per summer, and all of us learned valuable committee and crash boat skills in the process.

Every Sunday the HSA ran races for several one-design classes and an odd assortment of handicap racers. Mass starts were the order of the day and it was not unusual to see 30-plus boats of all different sizes and speeds all starting at the same time. If the wind blew across the narrow part of the race course, a four mark "X" shaped course was set to allow for longer beats to windward than a standard triangular or windward/leeward course could provide. The result was a nautical demolition derby of sorts as faster boats crossed slower boats at the intersection of the "X". We all learned the sailing rules of the road quickly but there were still some memorable crashes when the wind piped up and closing speeds increased. I still have an image etched in my brain of a Y-Flyer that "T-boned" a Thistle and rammed its bow through the Thistle's topsides and all the way to the Thistle's centerboard trunk.

The wind on this puddle was (and remains) one of the great mysteries of my youth. As the lake ran generally from north to south, the most reliable winds were north and south winds. However, in the summer months the prevailing wind was usually from the southwest to the northwest and blew over the forest on the west side of the lake and fanned out over the surface of the water in what seemed to be a random manner. One hundred degree wind shifts were not uncommon, and when the wind blew out of the east the conditions were even shifter. When no weather system was moving through the area we sailed on thermal winds created when a large bubble of air on the surface of the lake heated up and lifted off and the surrounding air rushed in to fill the void.

In these conditions it was common to see boats only a short distance apart sailing the same direction but on entirely different points of sail. The conditions were challenging, to say the least, but the shifty winds honed the skills of the racers in rather profound ways and several skippers went on to win regional, national, or even international one-design championships. At one point, I believe there were three national or international one-design champions who had developed their basic sailing and racing skills on this puddle of a lake.

The 17' Sandy Douglas designed Thistle was the undisputed queen of the one-design racing fleets, it was ideally suited to the light air typical of summers on Acton Lake. The Thistle hull is essentially a stretch version of the famous plumb bow International 14' dinghy design made popular by Uffa Fox in England, and with 175sf of working canvas and a large spinnaker, the Thistles seemed to make their own wind as they ghosted around the lake in the 0-5mph winds that were the norm for many Sundays. Sadly the Thistle fleet is all but gone on Acton Lake, although the class remains very popular in many other parts of the country.

Back home on Acton Lake enjoying the action at the June 2004 Sunfish Midwest Regional Regatta



The 18' Y-Flyer was also very popular and great fun for a two-person crew team to sail. The boat is very similar in looks to the much larger 38' inland lake A Scow but was designed to be built from plywood. With a powerful but manageable sail plan and no spinnaker (on American boats, at least) the boat was the ideal racing platform for two average sized adults or a husband and wife team. When the wind picked up to planing conditions, the Y-Flyer was the boat of choice as it came into its own at about the same time the three-person Thistle was on the verge of getting overpowered.

My own pick was the 14' Phil Rhodes designed Rhodes Bantam two-person open dinghy. The design was a stretch version of Rhodes' earlier arc hull Penguin catboat, but at 325 lbs., 130sf of main and genoa jib, and a huge spinnaker set on a 7' spinnaker pole, the Bantam was a little sports car of a racing dinghy. We had a fairly talented fleet of Bantam sailors who stayed with the class for decades and enjoyed close racing all summer long. All of the original Bantams were plywood affairs, but fiberglass boats finally began to be more common in the mid to late 1960s. Although Bantams are not raced actively anymore, I still own a 1972 Dick Besse built woodie that won me the International Championship on two occasions in the 1980s. They were and are a classic design and great fun to sail in all conditions.

The lake also inspired a few locals to design and build their own boats suited to local conditions. One brave craftsman built a beautiful wood veneer 505 hull with a wooden mast that was about 4' taller than the stan-

dard 505 rig. In light air it was a formidable opponent and in heavy air it was just plain scary to sail. Its second owner and I sailed it on Easter Sunday one spring and got caught in a 25mph snow squall, but that outing is another story. Yet another local took the plans for the Y-Flyer, scaled them down to 3/4 size, and rigged it with a Snipe mast, boom, and sail plan. Several of these W-Scows named after the designer, Jim Wagner, were built and were great fun to single hand in a breeze.

Acton Lake was not the only puddle in southwest and central Ohio. Just to the east was Cowan Lake near Wilmington (somewhat larger than Acton Lake) and home to a real sailing club with its own docks, a clubhouse, and all the bells and whistles. Other puddles included tiny Kiser Lake north of Dayton, and Buckeye Lake east of Columbus that boasted a world class Lightning fleet with the likes of George Fisher and his sons Matt and Greg. Hoover Reservoir north of Columbus had one-design fleets, and a tiny gravel pit lake just east of downtown Dayton hosted Sunfish frostbite racing. A couple of hours to the west one could sail on Geist Reservoir near Indianapolis, Indiana, a real hotbed of Y-Flyer and Snipe racing. For a big thrill, the local puddle sailors sometimes made the trek to Lake Erie and raced in regattas near Toledo, Cleveland or Erie, Pennsylvania. It was on these larger venues that the puddle sailors of southwest Ohio showed they could hold their own against the big lake rock stars of one-design racing.

I suppose that one-design and handicap racing was the glue that held the Acton Lake sailing enterprise together, but just going out

for an afternoon sail without the pressure of racing held its own special appeal as well. One summer when I was in college, I took a summer job that started at 6:00am but ended at noon, and I found that I spent four or five afternoons per week just messing about at the lake. These outings ranged from lazy single handed cruises or sailing in gale force squalls that sometime come up suddenly in the hazy afternoons of a Midwest summer.

College and career took me away from southwest Ohio in the early 1970s, and while I rarely visit my former hometown, I am still an avid small boat sailor and racer in the Sunfish class in upstate New York. Last spring I noted that the Sunfish Midwest Regional Regatta was being sailed on Acton Lake in June and I figured it was time to give my old stomping grounds another try. The lake was much as I had remembered it from my youth, although there were fewer one-design racers and more swing keel cruisers to be seen. Nevertheless, it was great to renew some old friendships and try my hand against competitors from all over the Midwest.

The racing was great fun and we even had good wind for all of the races. The regatta was one of the best I have attended in recent memory and I was reminded that it is the people more than the venue that make for a good regatta. I guess size really doesn't always matter as these tiny lakes in the middle of the Midwest spawned a whole generation small boat enthusiasts whose lives have been enriched by a damned up creek and a few acres of water large enough to have a name. "Puddle" to my way of thinking is not a pejorative term.

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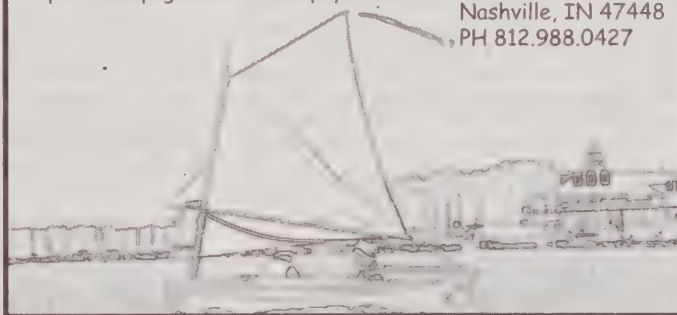
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Though I haven't been killed yet, I live down here in hurricane country and have been reminded of that two or three times (so far) this year. I have seen quite a few hurricanes and have had some close calls. The first direct hit I went through was in 1961 while I was in the Navy at Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. There were only a few of us on the naval station (which closed this year in retaliation, they say, for the citizens of Vieques Island protesting the use of the island as a bombing range) and we all huddled in the heavy duty poured concrete galley. I don't remember the name of the thing but it blew like blazes and killed a bunch of people. We all marveled as the eye passed directly over us and the bright sun shone down. I, for one, wanted to go out and look around but they wouldn't let us.

Another one was right after I got out of the Navy. I had a 19' homemade sailboat in a little marina down at Lanark. I went down to secure it and strung lines all the way across the little basin, hauled my boat out in the middle, and was fixing to leave and go back to Georgia when the marina operator said I couldn't leave the boat like that so I stupidly decided to stay and make sure it was alright. I sat in my car all night long and it blew and rained like all get out. It rained and blew so hard that I couldn't even see the boat at all, let alone get out and do anything about it.

Fortunately it rained full of water and sank to the bottom (it was an open boat with rock ballast) which was the best thing that could have happened because the storm surge came and all the other boats in the marina broke loose and pulled pilings and turned loose a bunch of floating docks and tore each other all up. One of them got on top of my boat and chafed the mast a little bit but mine was the only boat in there that didn't get messed up real bad.

A funny thing happened, though. When the storm surge went down, the wind reversed out of the north and blew the water out to sea and it was low tide so the rails of the boat were above water and I was able to bail her out and all was well (puzzled hell out of all the other people who had boats piled up in a jumble on various banks). I had an aluminum skiff on a trailer behind my car (a Rambler station wagon with reclining seats, vacuum windshield wipers, flathead engine, and six volt electrical system... a late model car at that time). I never wrote any "love letters to Rambler" (like you used to see in old *National Geographic* ads) and when I got ready to go try to find a way through all the limbs and junk so I could go back to Georgia and tell my family I was alright, the damned car wouldn't even move.

At first I thought that something must have gotten hung up under the trailer but when I went back to look I discovered that the boat was absolutely full of rainwater. I knew I had taken the drain plug out (I didn't forget things like that when I was younger) so I was perplexed. I knew the boat wasn't full of trash or anything (I was very neat when I was younger) so I couldn't think what could have possibly stopped up the hole so watertight that the boat was brim full three hours after the rain had stopped. It was a tiny dead bird (myrtle warbler) stuck in the hole head first. Anyway, when the water ran out, the puny Rambler was able to go a little bit and I rambled on back to Georgia.

Hurricanes

By Robb White

Another time I was working on the tugboat when hurricane Frederick hit down around Mobile (just like this damned Ivan). We had loaded two gasoline barges in the Chevron (now EXXON) refinery at Pascagoula. There was certainly no way we could cut and run so we just pushed out and anchored on the bayside of Horn Island. It was rough but we were in no danger... had to help the anchor from time to time with the engines and a lot of salt water blew through the door gaskets and we had to wash the whole boat, inside and out. The main thing for us (nothing compared to everybody else down there) was that the hurricane destroyed the Dauphin Island Bridge and blocked the channel into the intracoastal so we had to tow outside all the way to Yankeetown instead of easing down halfway in the creek. There wasn't anything new to that experience though and it had calmed off pretty good... perfectly slick by the time we made Yankeetown two days later. It usually calms off pretty good after a hurricane. I guess the atmosphere gets tired, too.

Another interesting thing happened during that hurricane. An empty petroleum barge got loose from another boat and blew way down Mississippi sound and eventually ran aground on one of the islands and two shrimp boats hauled it off and claimed it for salvage. It made a big hullabaloo in the courts for a long time down there. I can't remember who finally prevailed. I can tell you this, though, I would much rather keep up with loaded barges than empties at times like that. In 35 or 40 knots of wind a boat pushing two empties has to crab up so high that a lot of places in the intracoastal aren't wide enough and they just have to push up on something. You'll just have to wait for a lull to go under some bridges. Sometimes a thunderstorm will catch one in some tight place like Navarre or Perdido or downtown Fort Walton and some of them fancy docks are liable to get involved with the pushing up process.

Floridians love a fancy dock just like sea gulls, cormorants, and pelicans do. You don't see many fancy docks down on the canals of the Mississippi Delta. Them people down there have lived with tugboats long enough to have learned some sense. I was on tugs for a long time, off and on, and we were lucky enough not to have to push up any docks, but we did have to run over a Hobie Cat once. Didn't kill anybody, though.

I used to survey boats for insurance companies and had plenty of work after hurricanes. In the early days of fiberglass (what I call the "woven roving era") the boats would be in pretty good shape if they hadn't filled up with water. The main expense was getting them off the hill and fixing all those bent rudders, shafts, and propellers and putting up a little gel coat... spray on some Awlgrip® and the boat was better than new.

Now that they have invented the "foam cored" process it is a different story. I have been watching this year's devastation and I can just imagine the situation. Popular modern big boats are about equivalent to house trailers. That's why they are so popular... cheap... and a hurricane loves them both

equally. You ought to see the trash on the beach after a hurricane. What you find are chunks of foam with a skin of fiberglass about as thick as a 3" x 5" card on both sides.

Because of the bluntness of the way I describe boats made like that, I have decided not to do any more insurance surveys. I mean, my assessment of a wrecked boat is exactly the same as it would have been if the thing was brand new... a piece of crap.

Kate, back about '85, showed me that lesson. Though it went ashore 30 miles to the west of us, we were long gone. The storm surge was such that the whole island was under water (and high surf) around our house. When we got down there, it was easy to see the power of such a thing. There had been a wide expanse (two building lots deep) of high dunes seaside of our house but they were completely gone. There was no vegetation at all within half a mile of us. The house was just standing there on its pilings on sand as flat and smooth as poured concrete. We were still building on it (still are... I guess... might be gone) and the building permit which I had nailed to the piling in its little vinyl pouch about eye high was half buried. All the sand from the seaside dunes had washed under the house. The only things we lost were two sawhorses, a little pile of lumber, and all those sea oats, dwarf live oaks, yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*) bushes, and the little beach bushes like beach lavender (a lovely little thing).

We actually gained a little acreage on the bayside and all the plants eventually grew back, but the seaside dunes never did and now we have both seaside and bayside frontage. After the hurricane I had to dig up the well pump, but when I rinsed it out it ran fine. Modern electrical insulation is a marvelous thing. The winter after Kate a shrimpboat friend of mine dragged up a cheap plastic box fan. He said that he rinsed it out and it ran fine after he scraped the barnacles off the blades so it was back in balance. The lesson was in all the plastic strewed all over the place from all the boats that were destroyed. We are waiting for this Ivan to do his worst right now. The highway in front of the shop is full of people pulling their boats north and other people hauling plywood south.

During hurricane Opal they fooled me. I stayed over on the island thinking that it was going ashore much further to the west than it did. I was already beginning to get old and reckless... during Kate a bunch of boats got loose up in Tyson harbor on Dog's Island and cut loose and tore up a bunch of more boats. Tyson Harbor is as good a hurricane hole as there is around here if people only knew how to tie up, anchor or moor a boat but they don't, so it ain't. I had not only my old Morgan 30, but a 26' motor whaleboat down there. I pushed the whaleboat up close to the marsh and set out the Bahama moor with a 35-lb. high tensile Danforth and a 50-lb. Herreshoff copy (Luke). I was hoping that I was too far in for it to get hit and I hoped I had figured the wind right, but the sailboat draws too much water to get it upwind and close in so I had to leave it on its mooring.

My plan was to go down there when things got bad with my buddy who had a running (?) car and watch as best I could with binoculars and a powerful (million candle-power) jackalight he had. If I saw some damned piled high and deep cheap piece of junk heading for my sailboat, I was going to

swim out and climb in the whaleboat, crank up, cast off, and do a little pushing. I don't know if you know them old surplus Navy whaleboats or not, but the rule is that they can go through more than you can and I have proven that to be true. They are heavy duty, self-righting, unsinkable, and self-bailing (engine driven, self-priming centrifugal pump), and fire resistant. They are powerful (swing an 18" wheel) and have a very big rudder. I knew I had what I needed for the duty but I was wrong... again.

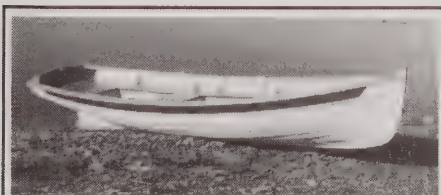
The old whaleboat was perfectly alright after the storm but the Morgan was long gone. When I found it on the mainland about 9:00 in the morning it had already been completely looted. They even took the air cleaner off the engine and the kitchen table and tried to saw the propeller off the shaft. The only thing they didn't take was the mooring line (1-1/2" polydac, polypropylene and Dacron blend... will float) which was hanging from the chock and cut off as clean as a whistle exactly at propeller height. I wondered how that scenario had played out down there while I was cringing up there in our reinforced bedroom with the waves washing completely across the island under the house and old Take Apart tied to the pilings full of water. If I hadn't had to bail her out and put the engine on and all the junk back in I would have caught those looters, and God help their miserable asses if I had. That's a terrible kind of person in my opinion.

Seeing what happens after hurricanes where all these human predators converge to take advantage of people who are in a bad fix, along with all the everyday common, blatant rudeness, mob rule ridiculousness, very trendy ignorance, and smugly demonstrated helplessness are the sorts of things that make me such a social skeptic. I think there are a lot of people who operate in the digitorectal* model... if they aren't plain out evil.

*Digitorectal... I wish I could lay claim to the origin of that very descriptive term, but I can't. I learned it from a friend of mine who I met through my friendship with old dearly departed Norm Benedict. His name is Herschel Smith and he lives in Connecticut and used that term to describe some of the drivers of that region... those who ain't paying attention.

You can see a perfect example of that on the TV after a hurricane. Those people who are driving around in all that salt water in the big new pickup truck and the big shiny SUV are operating in the digitorectal mode.

Editor Comments: Robb called us after Ivan about another matter and reported that all was well on the island, minor only to repair.



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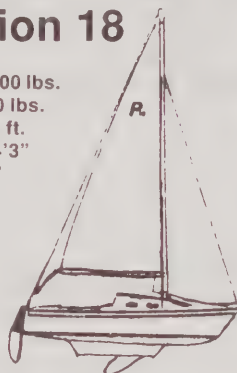
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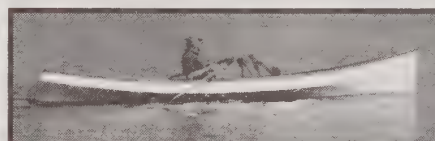
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For two weeks I was kayaking every day with a group of ten people and two instructors. We started our adventure at the western tip of Puerto Rico, Cabo Rojo, and finished at the eastern tip, Punta Tuna. Every day we camped on a different beach and got to explore mangrove swamps, coral reefs, and deserted islands. It was something uniquely challenging and removed from normal daily life. When I wasn't paddling, or working together with the group to take care of our needs while living outside on the water, or completely exhausted, I wrote in my journal. The following excerpts are some of the highlights.

The forest at daybreak was far behind us. I thought of how lucky we were to be there to see it, a long, lush coastline dwindling away into the distance. We awoke at 3.30am to cross the bay and paddle around Punta Viento, (windy point) at the southeast edge of Puerto Rico. When we reached the wide reef surrounding the point we had already passed through two squalls. We couldn't see anything in their midst but we kept our heading with compasses. Now I wore my visor in the rain so I could see. The point lives up to its name. Even though we had become accustomed to paddling east against the trade winds, everyone thought this was intense. We were making little headway against the high winds and seas, it was time to burn out. We skirted the reef and made for shore.

Paddling the Length of Puerto Rico

By Anne Salley

The wind ruled our lives. It affected our moods as well as our tired bodies. When the sun heats the land and sea, the air moves and the wind picks up. Because of this and the difficulty of paddling directly into the wind, we were usually off the water by 10.30am. This schedule actually worked quite well because we would have all day to set up camp, eat our meals, and explore the location.

One of our favorite locations was on the Cayos de Raton, a group of small mangrove islands that lie about three miles offshore. We came upon a small shady bay littered with Swiss Family Robinson style tables, docks, and benches. It was perfect for the shade and the many surfaces. There were also many hand painted signs in Spanish, obviously this was a place frequented by ferries on the weekends.

A much wilder spot is La Ventana (the window). We had been paddling for hours in 6'-8' seas along a rocky cliff. I was in a single for the first time and beginning to have trouble keeping up. The instructors were checking

their tow belts and the chatting had tapered off to shut up and paddle. I didn't see the window at first. It is an arching hole in the rock which jutted out before the bay. In it were framed dark green palms and hazy blue mountain beyond. This was to be our first surf landing. The gap in the reef that we had to steer through, without rudders, was about 8'-10' wide. It was exciting and challenging, the beach and surrounding area seemed an incredible reward to our efforts. Some visiting school children were also excited with our arrival and gave us packages of cookies, snacks, soda, and, most welcome, ice. We felt like refugees. Later I climbed to the many caves in the cliff and deserted meadows above.

Another of the spots that lingers in my mind was also reached after a long, hard crossing. We rounded the point as a squall began. There was an uninviting reef fringing the coastline. We spotted a known landmark, abandoned buildings slowly slipping into the sea. It was wild, huge waves pushing us towards the reef, strong wind and rain in our faces. It was an even more intense surf landing. One boat got too close to shore and almost went crashing into the abandoned buildings. Maybe the spot seemed so good because of the struggle to reach it. But once on land I couldn't help but appreciate the beautiful palms, interesting driftwood, and even the power plant looming in the background seemed interesting.

Now I am wearing a clean Pa'los del Patio shirt. I found it on a cayo off of Ponce. It has a stain from the coconut I picked from the first palm I climbed. I husked it with my hands and shared it with friends. It was perfect, young and green and big with a lot of water. The palm forest was near the campground we stayed at. That evening I met an older local man. As he cut a nut for me to drink with his machete, he explained that within a year the forest was to become hotels.

Puerto Rico is a great place to explore. It subtly reminds one of the States but the culture is like a bizarre dream where tractors rake trash from the beach parks and physical fitness and environmentalism are not fully understood. The greed and gluttony of the States is present, but in an island environment where the American dream cannot be sufficiently fabricated. Spots like the palm forest slip unnoticed into a mash of commercialism. If only every Puerto Rican and gringorican could see the island from the perspective of a kayak, maybe the natural beauty would not become an overlooked concept in the face of corporate globalization.

(The above story is from journal excerpts forwarded from Vieques, Puerto Rico, by my 20-year-old daughter, Anne Salley. The events relate to the last leg of an Outward Bound Program organized out of the Rockland, Maine, branch. The work included training on the schooner *Spirit of Massachusetts* and cruising about Culebra in whaleboats as well as the kayak expedition. Some other readers, young or old, may be interested in what the programs are like.

Brought up as a Cape Cod girl, Anne's interests are the beach, weaving, music, comparative religion, and nature writing, to name a few. She may be staying on Vieques for a while finding work as a gardener, waitress, and kayak guide. Steve Salley)



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Old Coast House

By Robb White

We went to the coast to see how wet our house got during that tropical storm Bonnie. It rained a lot and the roof leaks and we always have to go dry out the house so it won't mildew. I don't know if you paid close attention to Dave Carnell's article about antifreeze killing any fungus, but he is right. Moldy wood can be completely restored with antifreeze. One of the doors is right under a place on the porch where the roof has a bad hole in it and the rain runs down the door and it mildews on the inside...or at least it used to mildew on the inside. Alcohol will kill mildew on fabrics, too, but it isn't a permanent fix like antifreeze.

Anyway, we certainly were lucky (again). The old house was still there. I feel sorry for those folks down in Pine Island Sound where Port Charlotte and Punta Gorda are. I know a lot of those people had a lot of money, but up there where most of the damage happened were just regular working folks who didn't need to be put into such a bad fix.

After any kind of bad storm the Coast Guard always flies the beach looking for wrecks and dead people, I guess. While we were sitting in the seaside doorway watching the sunrise and eating our breakfast, here came the C130 flying down the beach so slow and low that we could see the pilot's faces and smell the exhaust (I think they burn diesel fuel). Later we went in the Rescue Minor all the way around the island to look at the sea turtle nests to see how many had gotten washed up by the surf (only one out of about 30...so far...Kate and Opal got them all) and saw a lot of wreckage from busted up boats. I hope they were just some that got loose from their moorings somewhere and were not somebody who got caught out.

Of course, this Bonnie never got much above 50 knots worth of steady wind and passed by pretty quick, but there are plenty of boats that can't stand even a little of that kind of thing. Some of the wreckage was from what I believe was the worst built plywood boat I have ever seen. The cabin roof was made out of 1/2" pine plywood with an edging just nailed into the end grain of the plywood with galvanized finish nails. No telling what kind of junk the hull was but we didn't get to see that...probably down there where the C130 went.

When we got back I got my big binoculars and in the clear air that follows such events was able to scan shore of the mainland pretty good. Our old coast house is exactly where the sun sets from us at this time of year and, though it is about ten miles away, I can easily see it with the binoculars and, just for old times sake, I look for it every now and then to see if I can recapture my childhood and see a bunch of children marauding the flats over there. This time I could plainly see that there was a big sailboat on the beach right in front of the old derelict place.

I don't usually go over there because the beach erosion and the decrepit nature of the old house makes me feel sad, but despite the fact that the old familiar beach is all built up with these tall plywood mansions with vinyl siding and fake chimneys and spires like some kind of monastery, it is still familiar so we do



make an occasional excursion to our old stomping grounds. Of course, this whole part of the country was and is our stomping grounds. So Jane and I got in the Rescue Minor and struck a bee line in the calm, muddy water for the old familiar tree line where the log house is.

There used to be one of the biggest sand dunes on the coast (Royal Bluff on the charts) just to the east of the house and we children used to inhabit it like it was a fortress. We had little trails all through the low, stunted live oak trees that capped it and pretended that we were Indians who were shooting the white people who strolled down the beach or came by in boats. The bluff has just about eroded into the sea now, and some fool has built a house right on top of it which is fixing to slide down to join the sand in the shallows before long.

One time some of us kids set up a trap up there. The highway (US 98, the coastal highway) runs through a cut through the back of the dune and there are high hills on both sides of the highway. We set up a fishing line across the road and carefully folded about five or six rolls of toilet paper like an accordion in the middle of the road and taped them to the fishing line, so when we hauled it in the paper would unfold and rise straight up about 20' like a great white barrier across the highway. This was about 1954 or so and there was hardly any traffic in the middle of the night along there (bumper to bumper now anytime) so we had to squat in the bushes and slap skeeters for a long time before somebody finally came along. Boy, did it ever work spectacularly.

The car was a '49 Ford, and when that great white wall sprang up in the headlights they ran off the road into the sandbed at the base of the dune. We saw four great big college football players come piling out of the car. Needless to say we (I was about 12 years old) cut and ran for the house and jumped into bed and pretended to be asleep. Pretty soon here came the college boys to get somebody to help them get unstuck and my father and one of my uncles had to get the chain and go down there with the car and pull them out. We were too petrified to get out of the

bed even though it was sandy as hell in there. Somehow, not a word was ever said about that incident and it is almost as if it never happened.

You know, I don't even know what those football players told the men of the coast house about how they wound up in the ditch. They might have tried to lie out of it somehow. I mean, if they told the truth, it wouldn't look too good that they got buffaloed like that.

So we idled up to the old anchorage in front of the old house and set the marvelous Bahama moor (even though it was dead calm and only about 8" deep) and went looking around. I do not trespass on other people's property so we didn't visit the old dilapidated house, but I did examine the sailboat that was on the hill right in front. It was a documented vessel from New Orleans, a fiberglass sailboat about 35' feet...one of those that is built for accommodations more than speed...short masted and big bellied...high, center cockpit style. The most interesting thing was the propeller. It was big, two-bladed, and controllable pitch. "Sabb" was cast in the stern tube casting. I don't loot other people's stuff or I would have been severely tempted to go get my tool box out of the boat. Of course, that thing must have weighed 75 lbs. and I don't have any use for such, but it was certainly admirable.

We walked up the beach to the west like we have done 30 jillion times in the past. We saw mullet jumping in the shallows that were absolutely uncatchable to us when that was where we lived. The same old stone crabs were under the same old pieces of concrete rubble where the Steyermans had a miraculous boat house which had a poured concrete slip dug back into the bank. Beach erosion from a hurricane got that thing back when we were just kids, and I bet we have pulled umpteen thousand stone crabs out from under the chunks. We didn't bother them this time though because the tide was falling and we sure didn't want to get stranded even if the flats were familiar...besides, we didn't have but one roll of toilet paper...so we strolled on back just in time to haul off and go back home. Luckily I didn't have any sad dreams or get waked up by any jet airplanes that night.

Hard Knocks and Cruel Spots

Alcohol abuse played a role last month. The second captain of the French ferry *Dieppe* rammed the entry jetty at Dieppe, he was drunk. And at Hamburg, the small acid tanker *Ena 2* collided with the container ship *Pudong Senator* and capsized. Most of the cargo of 980 tonnes of sulphuric acid escaped, causing a localized fish kill. The ship was righted and authorities announced that the master had been drunk.

The small (1,187gt) freighter *Southern Tiare* lost part of its rudder while en route from the Chatham Islands to Napier, New Zealand. It was carrying 150 cattle, 1,300 sheep, and general cargo. This is the second instance in recent months of small New Zealand ships losing rudders.

Off China the South Korean LPG carrier *Saehan Galaxy* collided with a small Chinese ship, which sank. At least one died. A sand-collecting vessel capsized after colliding with an unidentified vessel off South Korea and one is dead, seven are missing. The U.S.-owned tanker *Genmar Transporter* collided with the U.S.-managed tanker *Cape Bowen* while entering Quanzhou in poor weather. Some damage and a little oil spilled. The Russian freighter *Volgo-Don 5025* collided with the Georgian container ship *SunRays* in the Black Sea off Bulgaria and two Russian sailors are missing.

The Norwegian drill ship *Energy Searcher* was sailing from Singapore to Indonesia when it collided with a passenger ship. About \$1 million of damage to the drill ship. The Ghana-registered animal-feed freighter *Al Garhoud* sank in rough seas off Pakistan but the crew was rescued by a tanker. The small Belize-registered cargo ship *Artomoro* capsized off Sumatra and five of its crew of 19 are missing, plus some 30 passengers who may also have been onboard. One survivor floated for three days and nights in the sea before being rescued by fishermen. And so went the month...

The 1957-built British liner *Oriana* was preserved as a theme park, hotel, museum, and restaurant ship in Dalian, China. A fresh gale caused the 42,000-dwt ship to list in its permanent berth and it may stay that way.

Beyond the Horizon

By Hugh Ware

Navies

The Royal Navy found an unmanned mine-hunting mini sub it lost during NATO exercises almost a month earlier. It was floating off the coast of Sweden.

This summer, the U.S. Navy will try surging seven of its aircraft carriers at once in accordance with a new strategy called the Fleet Response Plan in which ships are sent overseas for shorter but more frequent periods. As many as eight carriers can be deployed, the remainder are in refit or training. Formerly a carrier was combat capable for only six months of each two-year cycle.

The Sea Sprite helicopter on the New Zealand frigate HMNZS *Te Mana* stationed in the Gulf of Oman was damaged during a routine engine run-up and a Russian air freighter was chartered to fly the damaged aircraft back to New Zealand and fly out a replacement and cargo for Kiwi forces in the area. Cost? N.Z. \$835,000 or about U.S. \$550,000.

Cruising

Norwegian Cruise Line America will have three ships operating on its Hawaiian intra-island cruises by 2006. The *Pride of Aloha* goes into service this summer, the *Pride of America* should be repaired and finished by 2005, and the 2,400-passenger *Pride of Hawaii* will join them in summer of 2005. Work on the *Pride of America* resumed after builder Lloyd Werft, its insurers, and banks agreed on a new delivery date. The vessel listed after strong winds went through Hamburg in January and five lower decks were flooded. The new christening date is June 6, 2005.

Nine hundred bathrooms on the new luxury liner *QM 2* were found to not fully satisfy fire regulations so she returned to Southampton where fire alarms are being installed in the bathrooms of all 1,300 cabins. Fire sprinklers will be installed later.

The cruise ship *World Discoverer* was seized by its mortgage holder, Singapore's Sembawang Shipyard, so the ship may not be seen in Alaska this summer.

When You Need a Lawyer Nearby

Divers at the Nova Scotian port of Sydney found two duffel bags filled with 83 kilos of cocaine bolted to the hull below water of the bulker *Sheila Ann*. The ship had arrived from Venezuela and is named after the wife of Canada's Prime Minister. It was owned by him before he turned control of his Canada Steamship Line over to his three sons.

After 18 months of investigation, 340 kg of MDMA, the pure form of the street drug ecstasy, was found hidden in a consignment of won ton sheets in a reefer container on a ship that had just arrived at the Australian port of Sydney from Holland via the U.S. Australian police estimated the MDMA would make 1.36 million pills.

And off Ghana a French warship stopped the Togolese tugboat *Pitea* and found more than two tonnes of cocaine with a street value of some \$50 million. A recent crackdown in the U.S. seems to be responsible for drug cartels trying new routes through Africa.

Hoegh Fleet Services was fined \$3.5 million for obstructing an investigation into whether the chief engineer of its *Minerva* built a "magic pipe" that bypassed the oil-content sensor in the waste water discharge. An unidentified whistleblower received a \$300,000 award.

Ferries

Last month's column reported on the stranding of Alaskan State ferry *Leconte*. Based on a statement by a state official we wrote, "As the tugs readied for a pull, she floated off on her own." That, it turns out, was only a partial truth. Salvors Crowley Marine and Titan Maritime want readers to know that the ship had no capability of floating on its own. As one salvor told me, "She was essentially a sunken ship perched on the reef and we thought we'd lose her several times." With six compartments ripped open, there was insufficient buoyancy to support the vessel. Only by extensive patching and precise use of compressed air could the ship float, and she did float off the reef on her own, but within ten minutes of the predicted moment!

At Anacortes, Washington, a man on the ferry *Chelan* thought he was in "Drive" but backed up with sufficient velocity that he broke a safety chain and landed 40-50 yards from the ferry. He was rescued.

Ferry journeys from the U.K. across the English Channel were down by 8% in the year's first quarter as business through the Chunnel increased by 1%.

Piracy and Terrorism

Three tugboatmen were being held by Abu Sayyaf terrorists when the group's leader was killed by a Philippines Navy special warfare group. The three are still being held, but now by another Abu Sayyaf group which has new firearms thanks to ransoms paid for six divers captured last year at a Malaysian resort.

Malaysia's APMM, a new federal Maritime Enforcement Agency, will take over the enforcement responsibilities of 11 agencies using 82 small and medium-sized vessels, mostly more than 20 years old and hand-downs from the other governmental departments.

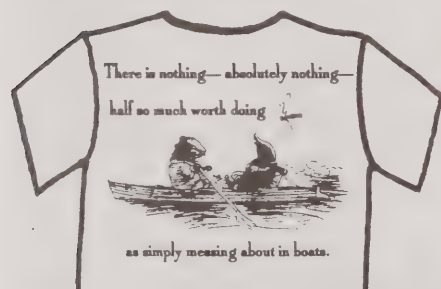
Indonesia's Navy chief now wants to shoot pirates on sight. He has been criticized for years for not doing enough.

Shipping was warned to stay away from the coast of Sumatra because of piracy and crew kidnapping.

Building, Repairing, and Scrapping

When the 26,000-dwt Norwegian rock-laying ship *Rocknes* arrived at a Polish shipyard after capsizing off Bergen, it was found to be in poorer condition than expected due to extensive metal fatigue in structural members. But the owner expects to have her rebuilt anyhow, even though the cost will be higher than the first estimate of \$42 million.

Shipyard accidents took a toll last month. In the Philippines, a wheeled crane was moving a gangway at lunch time when too many workers working on *Superferry 12* climbed or hung on for a ride ashore. The crane tipped forward on its nose and one man died while 31 were injured. In Kure, a crane-lifted 240-ton section of a freighter being built at IHI Marine United dropped and two welders were killed.



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At Boston, a civilian rigger fell to his death from the main top on the mainmast of the frigate *USS Constitution*, the world's oldest commissioned warship.

The four ex-U.S. Navy support ships are still moored in the U.K. awaiting legal decisions as to whether they can be scrapped there. And about 150 more ships in the Reserves Fleets must be scrapped by September 2006.

Maritime Environment

Greenpeace boarded the Panamanian bulkier *Etoile* to prevent it from docking in the U.K. with a cargo of what Greenpeace claimed were genetically modified crops. "We want this ship to turn around and go back to America," said a spokeswoman.

The new JLMD system uses hydrostatic pressure to force oil from the tanks of a sunken ship through a hose up to a salvage vessel. The system will be built into at least 30 ships on order.

The U.S. Coast Guard works the coast. The ships in Boston would go to sea on weather patrol duty, but the rest of us worked that area where the sea touched the land. When I first joined the Guard I had to sign a waiver because I was not 6' tall; we could get into a spot where I could not walk ashore. I know, poor shallow water Navy joke.

It was no surprise when one beautiful summer morning off the New Jersey shore we got a call. There was a whale on Barnegat Beach. The residents were not at all happy about it as it was beginning to smell. Barnegat Beach was only a few hours away and the *Agassiz* got the call to get it over there and fix the situation. When we neared the beach we got a call from the lifeboat station that they had the animal in tow and would get it out into deep water so we could take over the tow. As we approached we saw the life boat station's 36-footer pulling something larger than itself. That something turned out to be a sperm whale about 60' long. The 36-footer was not making very good time.

We worked up so the two boats were alongside and passed over the tow. As soon as we began pulling, the 1" line parted. The Atlantic was like a lake that morning, good thing, too, as we now had to re-rig a tow line on this animal. The skipper backed the ship up nearly on top of this creature and we managed to work a noose around the whale's tail. We were using our 2-1/2" nylon towing line. That would surely do the job.

Odd Bits

Australia installed machine guns on its Antarctic research icebreaker *Aurora Australis* as that country got even more serious about fish poachers in its Southern Ocean waters. Last year an Australian fisheries patrol vessel chased the Uruguayan fishing vessel *Viarsa* for three weeks before it was caught. The *Aurora Australis* will be replaced by a leased patrol vessel by year's end.

Panama Canal congestion eased from a peak of 119 vessels waiting for passage to normal transit levels as the Canal handled lock repairs and traffic about 15% above levels last year in the same period. In Turkey, traffic through the hundred-plus miles of the Straits is now causing no appreciable delays (overnight, at best).

A study in the U.K. reports that racing pigeons, after only flight home, prefer to follow major highways (even flying around the roundabouts!) back to their cotes rather than taking the shorter "as-a-crow-flies" route. So,

do migrating seabirds follow buoyed channels?

A shortage of railcars is forcing at least one British Columbia firm to use ships to move lumber to East Coast markets although it is slightly slower and more expensive.

And Headshakers

A Welsh family spent months planning a family move to Normandy and establishment of a holiday center for disabled children. The plans went awry when the family, and two pet rabbits, wanted to board a Brittany Ferries ferry. They were told that rabbits, even toy rabbits and lucky-charm rabbit's feet, were forbidden due to an old French mariners' superstition that anything rabbit brought bad luck. (This goes back to the 17th century when a food rabbit supposedly ate through the hull of a warship, sinking it and killing hundreds.) P&O was glad to take family and rabbits on one of its ferries, saying, "We're delighted to carry rabbits."

A Whale Tail

By Mississippi Bob Brown

We dragged that carcass backward through the water for about five hours and got it about five miles offshore. Whales were not designed to go backward and it was a real tug getting it that far. The skipper didn't want to leave this mass of blubber floating around in the shipping lanes, so we turned it loose there and headed for Atlantic City. We anchored off Steel Pier for a binocular liberty.

Before breakfast the next morning we got a call the whale had beached itself back on Barnegat Beach again, within a hundred yards of its first landing. On our way back to Barnegat the chief fabricated a hook that would hold the whale's mouth shut so we could tow it head first. It was the same routine as yesterday, but this time the life boat crew inserted the hook for us and away we went. Things went better this day and we were able make our pull at about three knots. We were well beyond the shipping lanes before sunset and the captain decided to turn the animal loose.

But he still felt that we were too close to the shipping lanes to just leave this mass of blubber floating around, so he decided that it

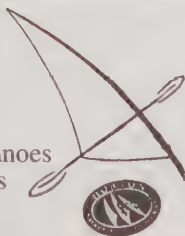
was good time for some gunnery practice. Once every quarter we were expected to fire our gun. The ship had a 40mm mounted on the forward deck. This cannon got uncovered and a crew was chosen. The chief picked a crew that had never fired the gun before and he acted as gun captain to talk the crew through the operation. Most of us considered the gun a joke. We would be going away at 14kts if we were ever confronted where the gun might be needed. Joke or not, it was always a welcome break in our routine when this gun got uncovered.

The captain had the idea that maybe we could blow this creature into littler pieces before we left the area, so we steamed back and forth past the carcass while the gun crew did their thing. The chief was a good teacher and his crew got several good hits. The H.I.T. shells that we were firing would go completely through the animal and not explode until they were 10-15 yards past the carcass. We had the whole area to ourselves and we fired up a lot of ammo that evening, then went back check our handywork out. That poor whale had holes punched through the blubber a foot around but it was still one big piece of floating blubber.

The captain said it was time to call it a day. He radioed our position and told anyone listening to avoid the area till the sharks did what we couldn't. We then set a course for Cape May. Our week's duty would be done in the morning.

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I am of the opinion that rowing is one of the simplest, most economical, and most enjoyable ways to get out on the water. It's also great exercise in that it's so much fun that I hardly notice it is good for me.

I used to have a 15' dory that I was very fond of. It was fast and fun, although inexperienced rowers initially found the 24" wide bottom to be a little skittish. The narrow bottomed, widely flared hull was actually quite stable once you got used to it or as long as you didn't try to stand up. It was a bit of a hassle when fishing, though, requiring the angler to stay in the middle of the boat if he didn't want to dump out the tackle box. The trouble came when freeing a snagged lure or landing a large fish. You simply could not get close enough to the side to look over at what you were doing without heeling the boat precariously. More initial stability was indicated for it to be used for casual angling. In answer, I drew plans for an 11' dory called Blackberry.

On a lark, I posted the one-page plan to the internet to see if anyone would like it. I was surprised and pleased to see that a few intrepid souls did more than like it. They were willing to risk their time and treasure to build one for themselves. The prototype was assembled by a local man who invited me over one afternoon to try her out. She turned out to be a stable, satisfying boat to row, as well as being attractive to look at. So far, I know of at least six Blackberries in use all around the world.

Eventually I started thinking that a longer Blackberry might be worthwhile for times when a passenger or two might wish to come along, so I drew the 14' version presented here. The extra length will make her faster and increase her carrying capacity by a large margin. She won't be as good in rough water as the narrow bottom dory that inspired her, but she'll still be gratifyingly fast and fun to row. Blackberry 14 is also a handy size, easily cartopped or trailered. She'd do well towed behind a larger boat, too. Finished weight depends a lot on the materials chosen and extras added by the builder, estimated at anywhere from 65-100 lbs.

Blackberry 14

Recreational Dory

14'1" x 48"

A Design by John Bell

Unlike most other homebuilt boats, rowboats are the one type where building actually makes economic sense (observation gleaned from experience, it's always cheaper to buy an older motorboat or sailboat than it is to build a similar capability from scratch). There are many good rowboats offered at retail, but most seem to be targeted to higher disposable incomes than the median boater. These boats generally don't exist on the used market, either. Therefore, if a boater wants a good rowing boat, emphasis on "good," then often the most economical way to get it is to build it himself. I dare say it's possible this boat could be built for \$200 by a frugal builder with cheap lumberyard materials. It's also possible to spend three or four times that! Most of us will probably fall somewhere in the middle, but it's still less than the thousands a new, store bought pulling boat will usually set you back.

In the interest of getting more good rowboats on the water, readers are cordially invited to build Blackberry 14, either from these plans or to download them from the internet. And because I know someone will ask, no sail rig, no motors.

Building Blackberry 14

For the real nitty gritty of plywood construction, buy a book from Jim Michalak or Dynamite Payson. They do a better job of explaining the process than I ever could.

She's drawn for either stitch-and-glue or conventional chine log construction. The chine logs could be either inside or outside, with outside chines being the easier and faster route.

The hull is cut from the expanded panels shown. Depending on how the builder chooses to build her, she'll take either three or four sheets of 1/4" plywood. I would not

object to making the bottom out of 3/8". There's enough room to scarf the panels if you like. Otherwise, any of the common butt joints are also acceptable.

The topsides are then bent around the three temporary forms. The forms are not shown as part of the nesting because they are disposable. Make the forms by screwing together a few sticks of scrap or cut out of some cheap OSB panels.

Builders can save a sheet of plywood by using the alternate expansion shown on a separate page. This pattern is only to be used with either internal chine logs or stitch-and-glue construction. If it's used with external chine logs (my preference for this boat), it's just not wide enough. Also, if using chine logs you should take the shape of the bottom off of your boat instead of plotting and cutting from the plans.

The drawings show the stem and transom framing bevels.

The gunwales are two courses of nominal 1" x 2" laminated on the outside of the hull to finish 1-1/2" x 1-1/2". Whatever you do, don't remove the temporary forms from the hull until the gunwales are on! The shape will suffer if you do.

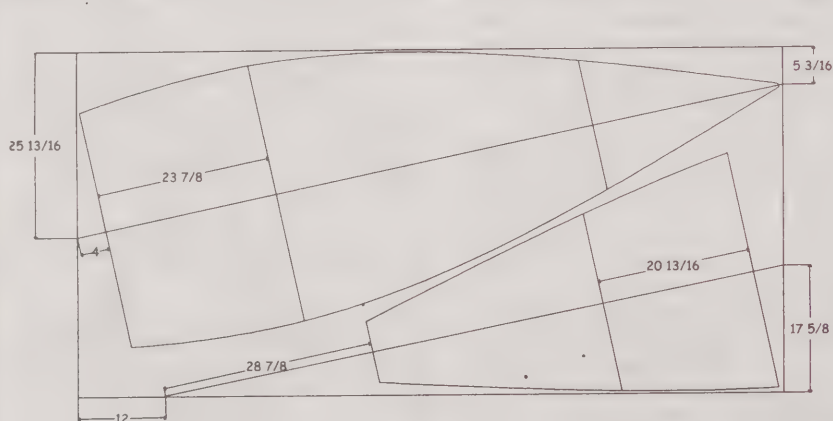
I'd also suggest a couple of thwarts fore and aft and/or a breasthook at the stem and knees at stern to help her hold her shape.

The drawing doesn't show it, but a skeg is strongly suggested, about 2' long by 4-5" deep, sawn from a length of lumberyard 1" x 6".

I'm partial to using a simple removable box 12" x 14" x 7" tall instead of installing a fixed rowing thwart, but if someone wanted to put one in, it would be just fine. Seven-and-a-half to eight foot oars are recommended.

Plans are available in Adobe Acrobat PDF format for free at <http://mistermoon.home.mindspring.com/plans/blackberry14.pdf> or contact the designer with a SASE at 4460 Dunmovin Dr., Kennesaw, GA 30144. Direct email correspondence to <john.m.bell@earthlink.net>

If someone builds a boat to this plan, I'd appreciate the courtesy of a picture and a note.



Blackberry 14 Alternate Bottom Panel Layout

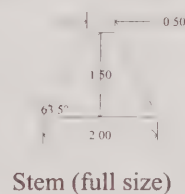
Note: Use only for taped seam or inside chines.
Will not work for outside chine construction.

© 2002 - John Bell, Kennesaw, GA

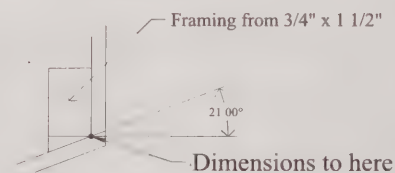
Transom bottom
bevel (full size)

Framing from 3/4 x 1 1/2
- Dimensions to here

36.00°

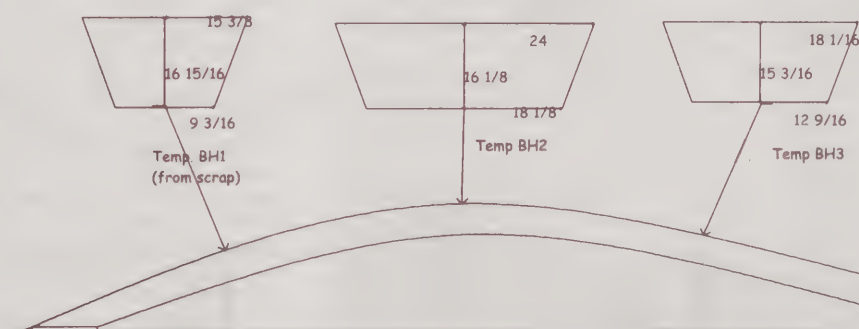
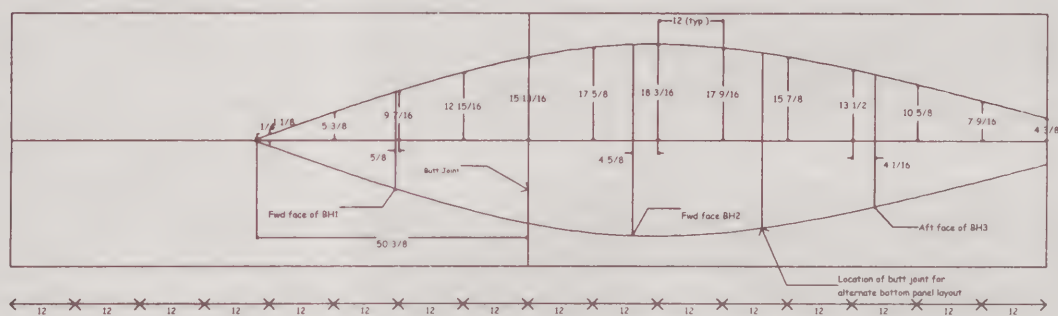
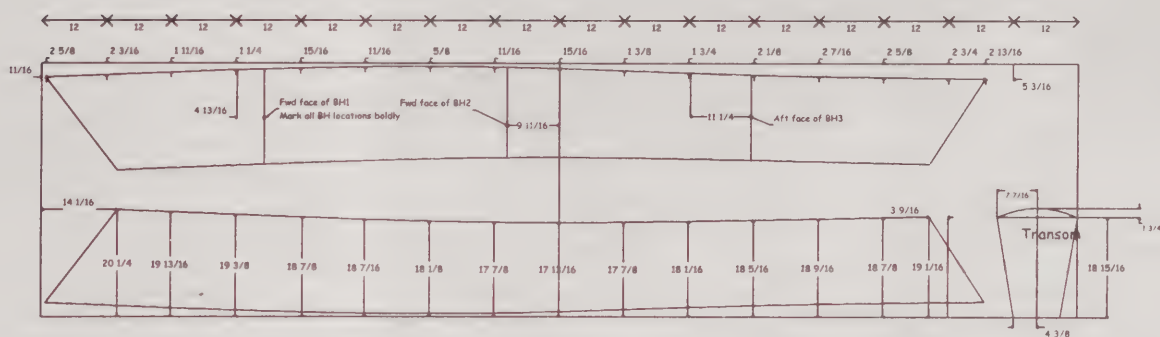
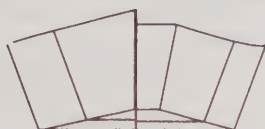
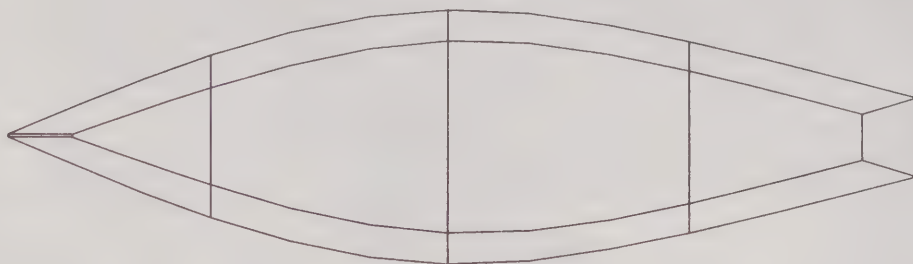


Stem (full size)



Transom side
bevels (full size)

(c) 2002





I still cannot believe that this wonderful model is mine thanks to her builder Lloyd Johnson.



Running Tide on her maiden run on the first decent New Zealand winter day.



A Gifted Scale Model Schooner Heads South

By Mark Steele

Now and again in one's life some of us experience acts of extreme kindness and, occasionally, equally extreme generosity from persons that we have never actually met.

So it was when one early winter murky afternoon in our home in Auckland, New Zealand, this publisher/editor of humble, model sailboat magazine received a telephone call from a reader never met, Lloyd Johnson of Costa Mesa, California, to say that a model pinky schooner that he had built, and which I had raved about in the then current issue of my *Winding World*, was on the way to me by international air freight as a gift.

A super keen model yachtsman and builder of fine models, Lloyd "Swede" Johnson has been a reader, and indeed a wonderful supporter of my magazine, for eight of the nine years that it has been appearing. Although we have never met we had talked on the phone several times and he and his sailing models have been featured from time to time. Nonetheless, in this day and age where air freight costs an absolute fortune, particularly on something of this nature, it is far outside the parameters of ordinary kindness. That, however, appears to be the kind of person that "Swede" Johnson happens to be, and to merely say that I was taken by surprise at the news would be an understatement. I was utterly gob smacked!

The pinky schooner is said to have originated in Europe as far back as the 1600s and received the name from its distinctive, but unusual, uplifted or "pinked" stern design. I have renamed the schooner *Running Tide* and there is some connection I have noticed in that the original schooner built at Milbridge in Maine was called *Glad Tidings*, so there is a bit of "tide" in her somewhere. The notes on her plans make mention of the fact that she had sailed well, was very stiff, but had an easy motion. She had also required 11,250 lbs. of ballast.

The winter weather in New Zealand has been far from pleasant (other than the odd bright and freezing cold days often difficult to pick) so *Running Tide* has had several weeks on the hard in a passage way within our house awaiting the relaunch which will be preceded by the opening of a bottle of wine... to ward off any ugly sea serpents, as well as to attract the most beautiful of Antipodean mermaids, of course.

The measurements of the model are: hull length 100cm (she's quite a big girl), with a nice broad 27cm beam (those are personal to a lady!), bowsprit 40cm, length overall 146cm. With no keel and all of her weight inside the hull, the schooner is heavy but liftable by the masts... just!

An editor must be careful (I have learnt) not to wax too lyrical about another man's boat, certainly never about another man's wife. Holy macaroni, the consequences of the latter... well, they could be utterly embarrassing, and that is putting it mildly!



To live near the water and to not have a boat is probably against a law of Nature, as well as being obviously masochistic. But what does one do if one does not care to cope with the whims of the wind nor suffer the noise and odors of a polluting fossil power plant? "The winds and the waves are always on the side of the ablest navigators," hints Edward Gibbon, neatly summarizing the art of navigation in terms of Francis Bacon's "mastery of Nature through obedience." To update these 17th and 18th century aphorisms we might formulate another, appropriate to our own age of environmental concern: "Next to sail and solar power, human power is the most ecologically benign."

But with sail power so spasmodic, solar panels so expensive, and batteries so limited in storage capacity, we are left with just our precious bodily resources. Paddles and oars, of course, have been used to move us on the face of the waters since the beginning of time and have much to recommend them for simplicity and economy. But paddling is tiring and rowing is backwards, so what are our options?

Pedal power, naturally. Why not sit comfortably facing forward and with one's hands free for more interesting things, using one's more powerful leg muscles as the means for maritime locomotion. Not for walking on water, of course, but just as the invention of the wheel made things go easier on land (at

Skiffcycle

A Lightweight Car Toppable
Single place Watercraft for Use
in Sheltered Waters
Designed by Philip Thiel, NA

Length overall: 15'7"
Beam overall: 3'9"
Draft: 2'1"
Weight: 80-100 lbs.

the cost of some slight complication) so also does the marine paddle wheel or screw propeller provide an effective conversion of pedal torque into propulsive thrust on the water. If shallow water is not the case, the weight and windage of paddle wheels then leaves the propeller as the answer to our prayer. Now, if speed's your game, then high tech's the name, and the air propeller and hydrofoils are the way to go. But, if once afloat you are "there," then the submerged screw is the one for you.

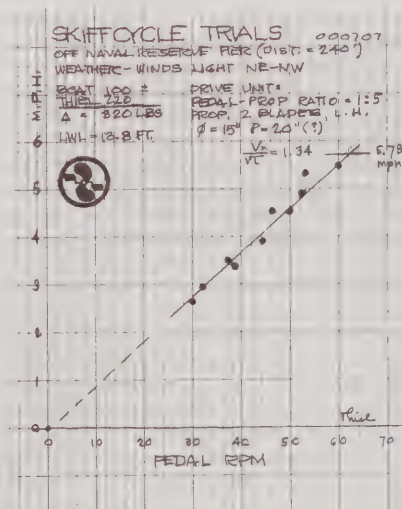
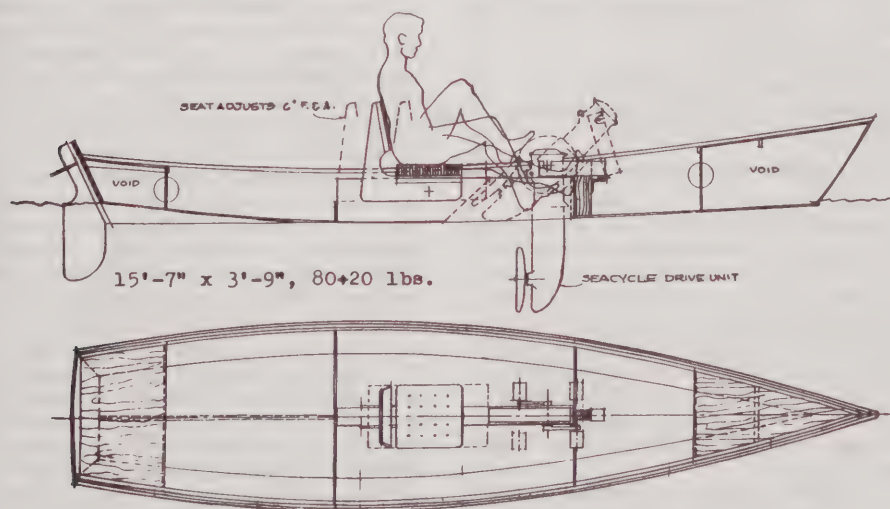
The Skiffcycle is one of several pedal power screw propelled small boat designs intended for the do-it-yourself builder at the skill level of the advanced amateur. For the most part these designs are based on the use of materials readily available from local lumberyards and hardware stores.

Using the limited power available to average adults on a sustained basis (assumed to be .02hp for one hour) they move at speeds comparable to rowing, but in a vastly more comfortable and convenient manner. Providing healthy aerobic exercise, they are non-polluting, ecologically benign, and blissfully quiet.

The Skiffcycle design capitalizes on the use of the drive unit available from the Meyers Boat Company for the mechanical complications. This retractable and demountable foil shaped device has a set of pedals at the upper end and extends through the hull in a well, with a two-blade propeller at the bottom. Pedaling at an easily sustainable rate of 50rpm the Skiffcycle does 4-1/2mph and reaches maximum hull speed of 5-1/2mph at 60rpm. The fully detailed plans for the Skiffcycle (\$40) provide for several options. The well may be arranged for drive unit retraction (if the boat is to be beached) and for removal, or for just removal. Alternate designs for the skeg and rudder allow for extra maneuverability, or for steady tracking. The single seat, using a Type IV PFD for a cushion, adjusts 12" fore and aft to accommodate individual leg lengths.

To make room for the next design the prototype is for sale, at out-of-pocket costs in Seattle.

Philip Thiel, NA, 4720 Seventh Ave. NE, Seattle WA 98105.





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We thought it would be interesting to follow the William B. Jochems schooner article with another schooner of our design, a very conservative schooner, an uncontroversial schooner that makes a respectable show in old gaffers races. Bradford Story built her in 1979 in the old yard in Essex, Massachusetts, for Charles K. Ridge. Her construction was classical plank on frame, bronze fastened. She was built time and materials, that is, not to a fixed contract price, with orders to make everything of the best. Story was a quick working builder who could be trusted not to abuse such a contract (he had launched our *Resolution* the year before on a similar arrangement), but he took special pains with the finish on this one. She has always had the best of care and at 26 years of age she looks exactly as she did on her launching day.

Although she was intended to look like a "classical" schooner (meaning something like the 1920s fisherman type yachts by Alden, Hand, Roue, and others), she has many unusual features. Ridge's summer place is at Conomo Point, in Essex Bay, a mile down the Essex River from where she was built. Essex Bay in general, and its entrance on the Ipswich Bay side in particular, is choked with sandbars and puts a high premium on shoal draft. But the owner didn't want a centerboard, so we went to the long, shallow keel.

Even the centerboarders of the era we were imitating drew 4-1/2' or so because they were designed to take a lot of inside ballast and had deep bodies to get that ballast low.

Bolger on Design

Shoal Long Keel Schooner Shearwater

Design #353

Length on deck 39'7"
 Length waterline 34'4"
 Maximum breadth 9'9"
 Maximum draft 3'3"
 Displacement 18,750lbs
 Ballast 5,250lbs lead, in the keel casting
 Sail area 749sf

Shearwater was to have all her ballast outside on the keel, with a much shallower body so she could have the effective lateral plane, the salient keel, to enable her to sail to windward respectably at a shallower depth. (I once designed a deep bodied, all inside ballast schooner with very little salient keel. Her lateral plane looked good in profile, but most of it was in the hull body and didn't work as well as Shearwater's flat sided keel in preventing leeway).

Shearwater sails close hauled drawing only 3'3" and makes little leeway in a fair

sailing breeze. She would sail faster with a short, deep fin instead of the long shallow keel, but not in Essex Bay or most of the other objectives in this locality! And as experienced 1,000 years ago by the Vikings in their very shallow long keeled craft, recently studied in a Danish test tank, or more recently observed by Micro owners, Shearwater's wake features the coiled silver rope vortex coming off the windward side of her keel edge. In Shearwater's case this apparent vapor trail did not collapse until at least two boat lengths abaft of her.

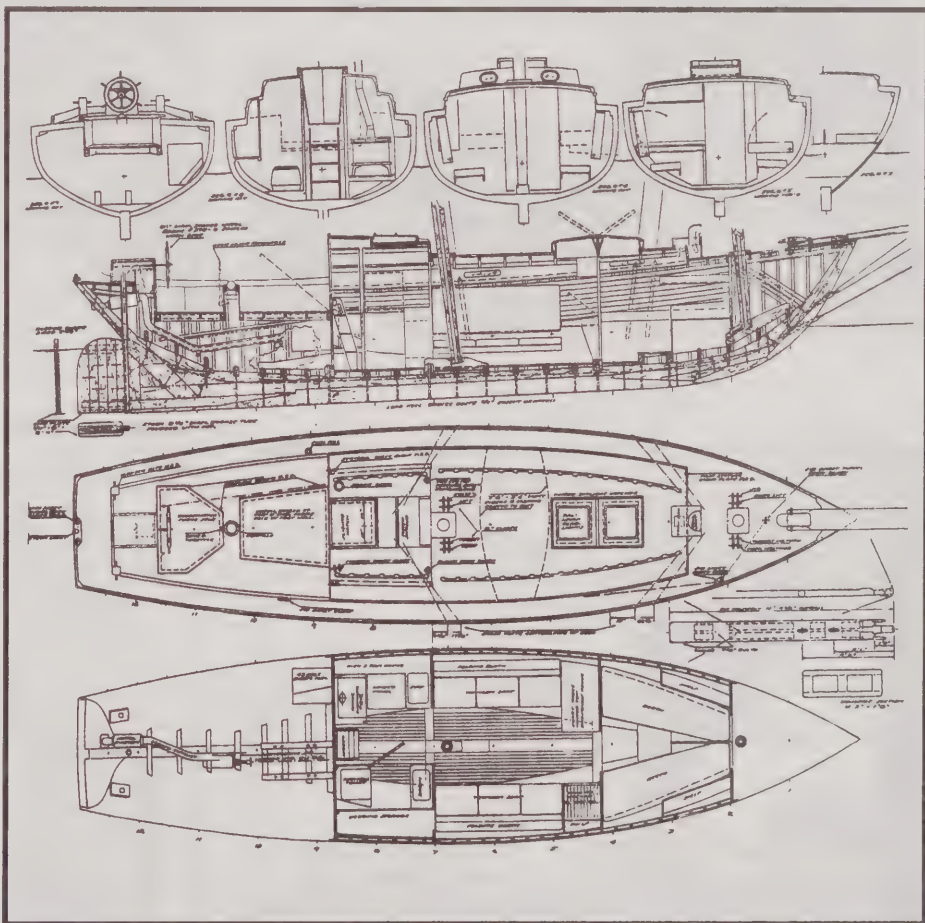
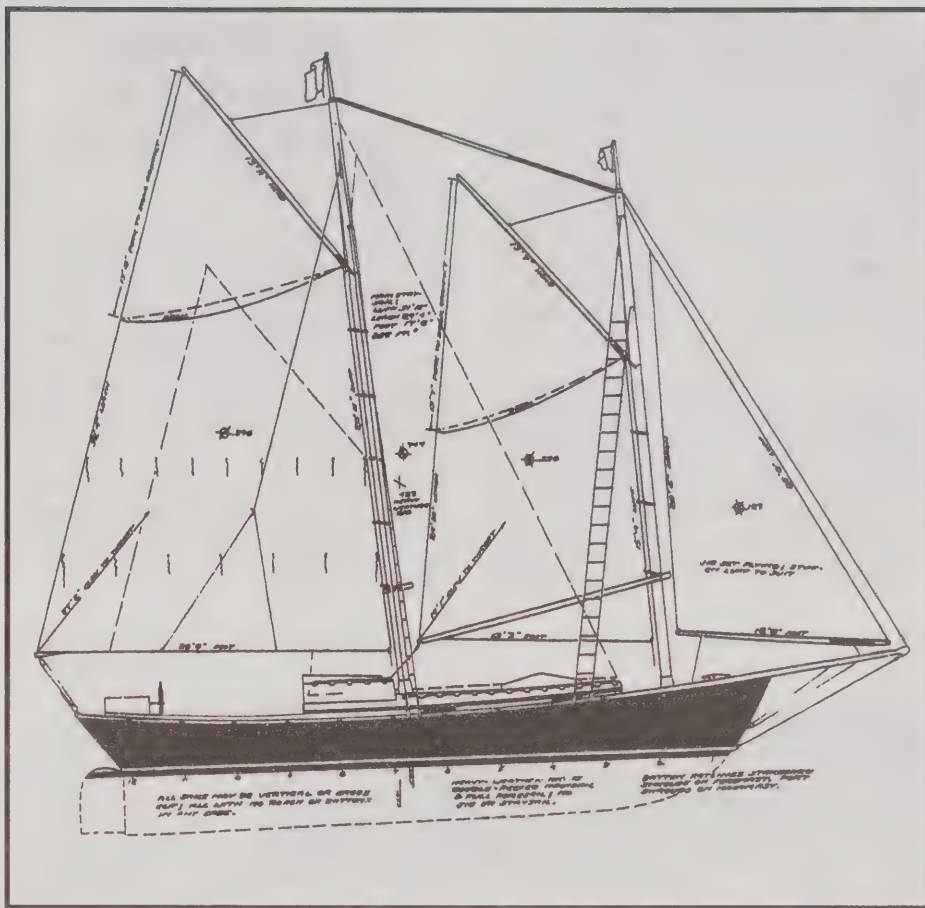
A very concentrated sign of an inefficiency apparently inherent in these lateral plane geometries, the power it requires to generate this low pressure vortex would clearly be beneficial to the hull's forward progress, both in terms of speed improvements and/or reduced leeway. Numerous keel end plate geometries have been entertained in an attempt to potentially harness this power, but none have been tried on the scale of Shearwater, or our Longship for that matter. At least the numerous Micro owners might find this potential upgrade in their boats' sailing capability worthy of discussion.

The boats she was supposed to resemble, the "traditional" schooner yachts, all had quite low freeboard, but I reduced Shearwater's beam a lot from what had been customary. The effect was that she could heel much more than the wider boats before her deck went into the water. She has a greater range of positive stability, which is one of the major factors of

With her narrow beam and slack bilges, she might be expected to be tender under sail but, in fact, she is stiffer than the old timers because she doesn't carry much of her displacement low where it has to be ballasted just to keep it from floating up. Even on her (comparatively) shallow draft the long outside ballast casting is lower than the inside ballast of a deep bodied boat. Lastly, the schooner rig carries its area low by present standards.

The sail plan shows a strut between the mastheads and the foremast shrouds drifted far aft. The idea was that the strut braced the mainmast so that its shrouds could be in line with the mast and allow the mainsail to be squared all the way out, while the drift of the foremast shrouds produce a tight forestay without backstays. The penalty would have been that the foresail could not be squared out to sail wing and wing before the wind. It was decided at an early stage of construction to give her a conventional rig. She was also intended to have sprit booms with a tricky geometry which was thought too experimental. She had conventional booms from the outset. And in the hands of her second owner, Daisy Nell, the fore and mainsails were made loose footed. Shearwater's appearance at this summer's Gloucester Schooner Festival offered us a fine chance to examine her action in a fair breeze in her current state.

Plans of Shearwater, our Design #353, are available for \$550, sent priority mail, rolled in a tube, from us at P.O. Box 1209, Gloucester, MA 01930.



My friend, Jim Lohr, owns a 14' Crestliner fiberglass motorboat powered by a 6hp Evinrude outboard. With two of us aboard it will do about 6mph because it just does not have enough power to plane. By himself, Jim says it will plane and do about 7mph. Since I own a 6hp Johnson outboard, we decided to see what the boat would do with two engines on the stern. We moved one engine aside and attached the other next to it with only inches to spare. The propellers were only 18" apart and the engines touched on turning, giving us about 15 degrees of turning radius. We knew we would be making wide turns.

The boat was launched on the Miles River on the Chesapeake on a calm August afternoon, and I took along my Etrex global positioning satellite receiver to accurately measure speed. After warming up the engines we smoothly accelerated up to 10mph. Then the trouble began. The starboard mounted Evinrude would pull smoothly all the way to full throttle. However, the port mounted

We moved one engine aside and attached the other next to it with only inches to spare.



Double the Horsepower and Double the Speed

By Robert A. Musch

Johnson would pull well only to about half throttle before it would start to cavitate. Engine rpm would increase dramatically without any increase in speed.

Jim had his hands pretty busy adjusting throttles and steering tillers while trying to watch where he was going. He tried various combinations of throttle settings and engine alignment to get the highest speed, but the best we could do was 11.1mph. I moved my weight forward and aft to trim the boat while videotaping the whole procedure. Then we went ashore so I could take photos from the beach. All the weight in the boat was moved forward for trim and he tried it by himself

The highest speed attained was 13.3mph before that port engine would start over-revving.

Why did the port engine cavitate? The three-bladed propellers were identical and turning in the same direction although they were very close together. Were they interacting with each other? It felt like the engines had a lot more power to give but the boat just could not use it. Does this boat simply lack enough planing surface to get up and go no matter how much horsepower is applied? Perhaps one 12hp motor would push this boat faster because there would be less surface protruding below the waterline. On the way back to the ramp we noticed that everything just seemed "right" with this motor combination at about 10mph.

We didn't prove very much. Our wives would never imagine putting two engines on a small boat and spending hours trying to make it go faster. But we had a lot of fun running up and down the Miles River laughing the whole way, and that is the point of simply messing about in boats.

Jim had his hands full adjusting throttle and steering tiller while trying to watch where he was going.



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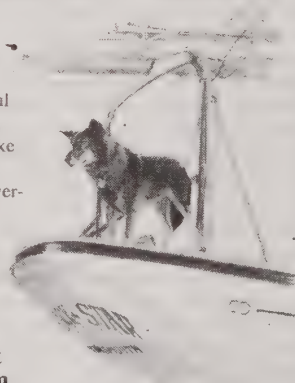
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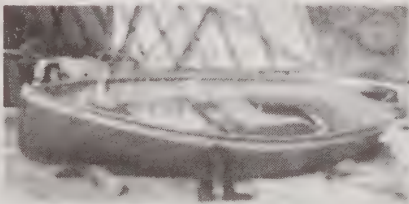
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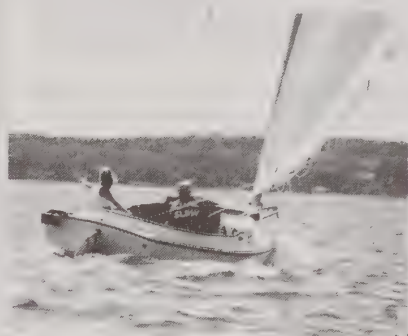
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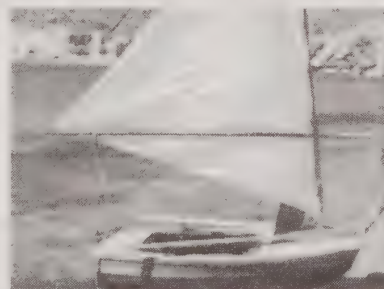
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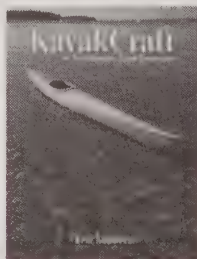


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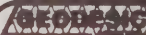
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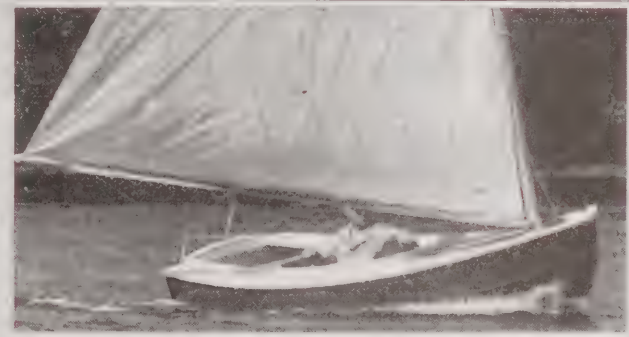
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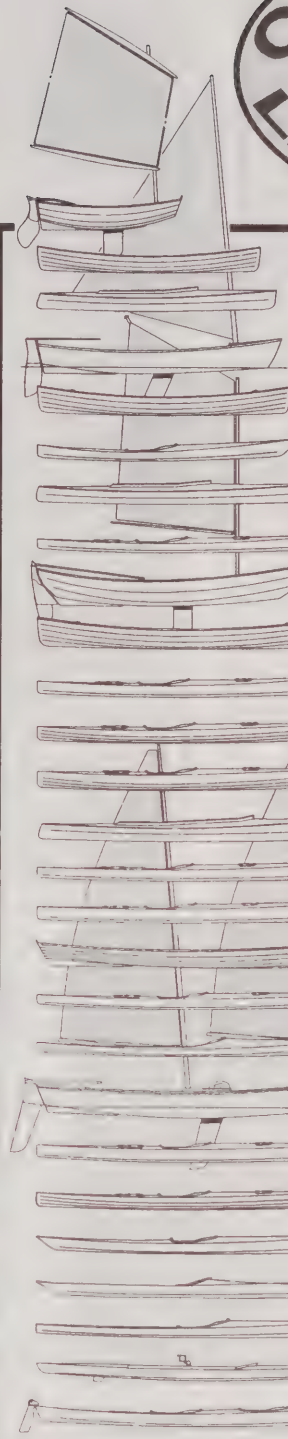
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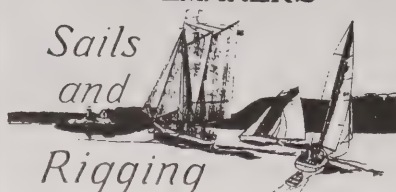
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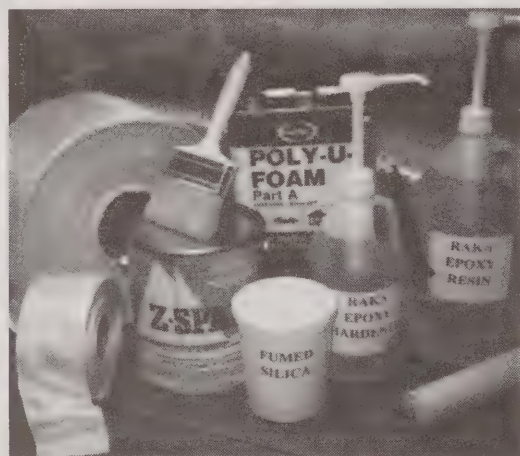
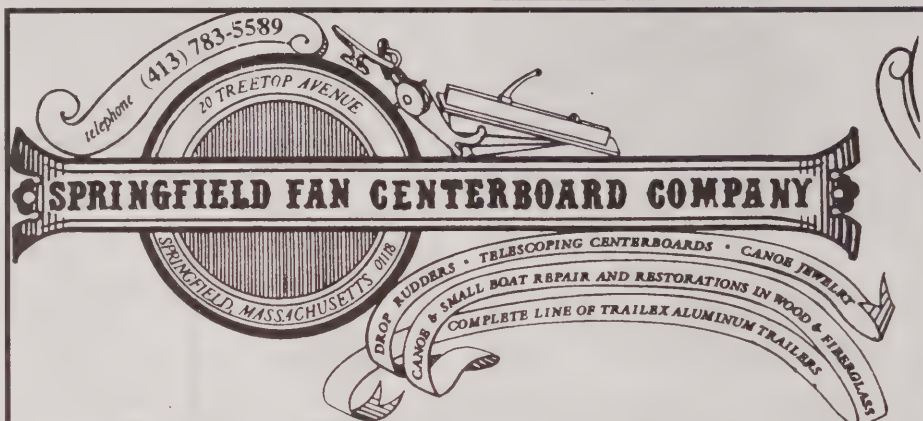
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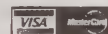


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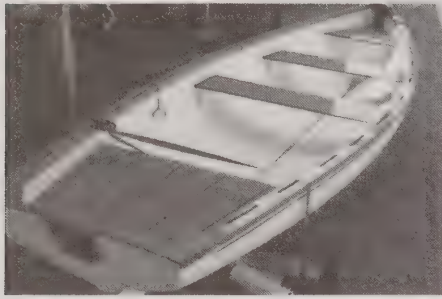
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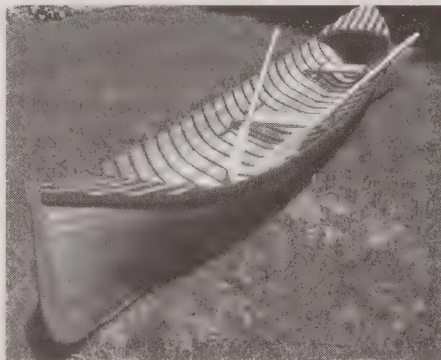
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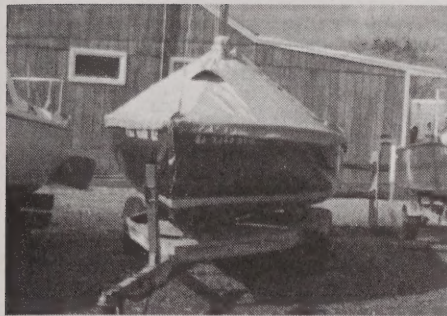
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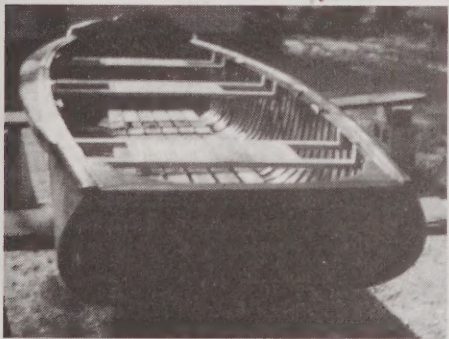
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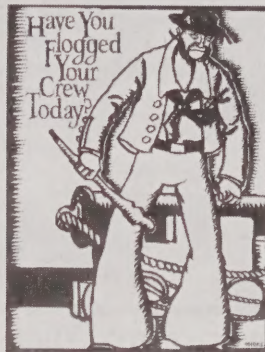
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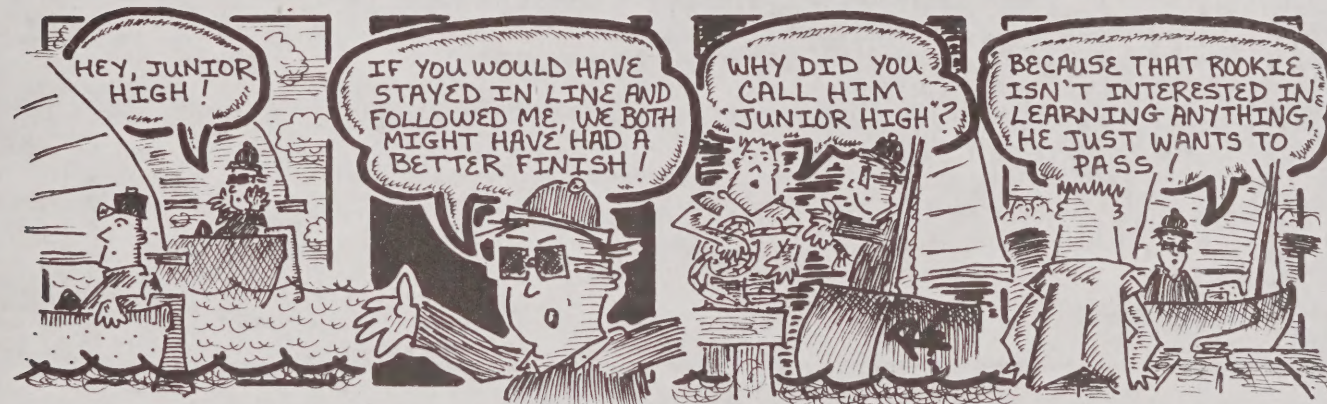
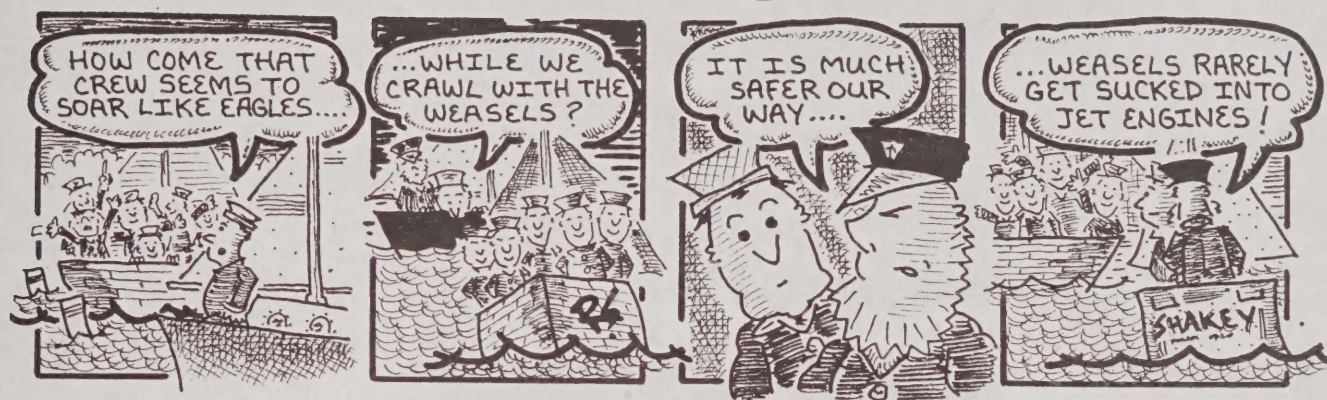
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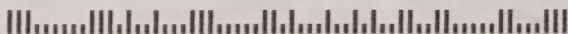
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